



JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA



ALAN DAVIS
MARK FARMER

THE NEW 52

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION

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LEAGUE
OF
AMERICA**



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JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

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THE MAIL

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION

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JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA: THE NAIL
THE COMPLETE COLLECTION

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FOREWORD

by **ALAN DAVIS**

"We never recognize the best times of our lives when they happen because we are too busy living in the moment." I think some wise old philosopher said that, or I might have read it in a fortune cookie. Either way, producing the pages in this book certainly rate as a particularly enjoyable high point in my career—though it didn't start that way.

I related much of the evolution of *THE NAIL* in the afterword I wrote for the 1998 TPB (included at the end of this book), which is why I was initially reluctant to write a preface for this collection. Upon rereading the 1998 text I was reminded that one omission, the five-year development delay, had been the source of countless queries at conventions over the past two decades, but, more significantly, I realized I had also neglected the pivotal role of K.C. Carlson.

In 1993, when Archie Goodwin invited me to submit a JLA Elseworlds story, I wasn't looking for extra work, but the opportunity to draw the Silver Age JLA was irresistible and the central premise that was to become *THE NAIL* materialized with so little effort and seemed so perfect that I submitted my synopsis with the absolute confidence it would be received with the same enthusiasm I had for my idea. Not so!

Months passed before my proposal was returned covered in notes by at least three different hands. It didn't seem like there was a single element that hadn't been criticized. I was still convinced my basic idea was good so I assumed (hard to believe) that my lack of experience in writing a synopsis was at fault. I decided to hone the synopsis and address all of the criticisms.

The first note: "Batman is NOT an alien." Of course I knew that, but in my plot the general public are prepared to believe all metahumans are aliens. And why not? In the mainstream DCU, Batman has put a lot of effort into shrouding himself in mystery.

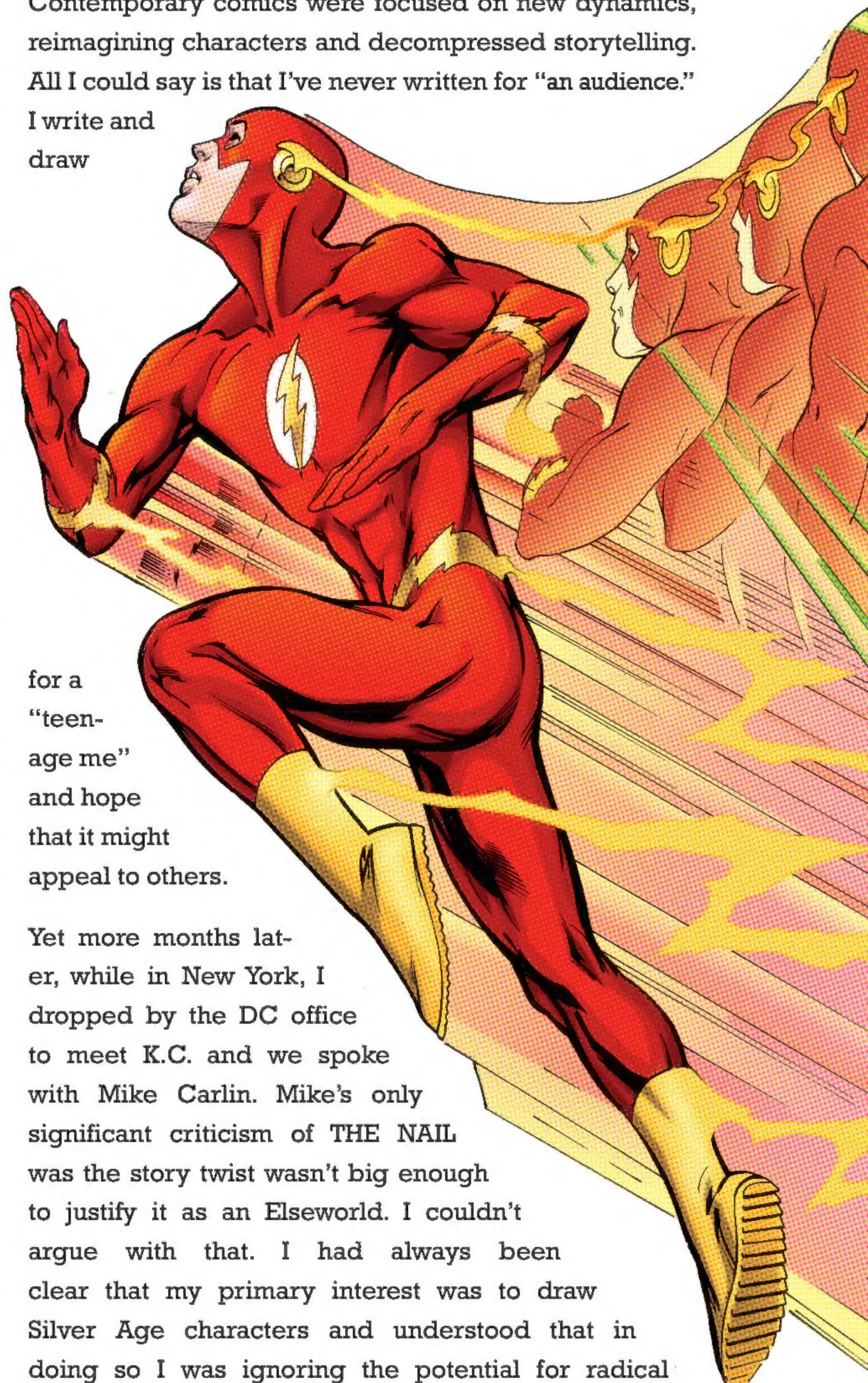
So it went through dozens of notes to the final criticism. "The whole premise is wrong; the Amish only live in Pennsylvania." Not true. I photocopied various encyclopedia entries detailing the spread of Amish people throughout the USA. By the time I had finished, my list of replies was twice as long as the proposal. Argumentative or defensive, either way it didn't feel positive. A last-ditch appeal perhaps.

Many more months later, I agreed to pencil covers for the *LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES*, primarily because my long-time collaborator Mark Farmer is a huge LSH fan. During what became regular monthly conversations to discuss LSH cover concepts, editor K.C. Carlson asked if I had ever considered drawing a book for DC. I suggested, perhaps a bit sarcastically, that K.C. check out *THE NAIL* proposal. I was more than a little surprised when we next spoke and K.C. said he had unearthed my proposal, read it, liked it and hoped to move it along. K.C. was clear that it would take time. Contemporary comics were focused on new dynamics, reimagining characters and decompressed storytelling. All I could say is that I've never written for "an audience."

I write and draw

for a "teen-age me" and hope that it might appeal to others.

Yet more months later, while in New York, I dropped by the DC office to meet K.C. and we spoke with Mike Carlin. Mike's only significant criticism of *THE NAIL* was the story twist wasn't big enough to justify it as an Elseworld. I couldn't argue with that. I had always been clear that my primary interest was to draw Silver Age characters and understood that in doing so I was ignoring the potential for radical



reinvention in favor of fanboy nostalgia. This at a time when nostalgia was out of fashion and the JLA didn't even have their own title. Mike offered a few alternative, more dramatic twists but I wasn't swayed.

Even more months later, at a convention, possibly San Diego (they all blur together after 25 years), K.C. asked me to speak with Mike Carlin. We met in some non-descript corridor and spoke for only a few minutes. THE NAIL was given a green light. After the passage of so much time it seemed a bit surreal—then reality set in. You've got your chance, now prove you can do it!

The first hurdle was the page count. I'd had a vague notion of a single 48- or 64-page book, maybe two 48-page books at most. Suddenly there was talk of twelve books of 24 pages. Six books of 48 pages. Each book would be expected to finish with a cliff-hanger. Not easy to manufacture. Even if I could expand the story to fill that many pages without diluting the narrative, it would take me three or four years to complete.

The most difficult aspect of plotting the books was to avoid the temptation to include too many vignettes. The simple narrative through line had to be carried and passed forward like a baton in a relay race. There were more than a few occasions when I wished I'd taken more pages BUT, when the panic was over, I'm glad I'd kept it tight.

I had written all three plots and begun to pencil the first issue when K.C. decided to leave DC. I was disappointed but could understand his decision. Before departing K.C. brought his replacement, Peter Tomasi, up to speed for a seamless transition.

So seamless, in fact, that it wasn't until months later, during an exchange with Peter, when I realized that aside from his invaluable support and encouragement, K.C. had been crucial to the existence of THE NAIL. I enjoyed a good working relationship with Peter (often busting each other's chops), so I'm sure he won't mind me relating an approximation of our exchange:

Reading through the final text, Peter said, "The Flash's dialogue sounds all wrong."

I said, "I thought it was in character."

Peter said, "Naw. He sounds formal. Like a scientist or something."

"The Flash IS a scientist...a forensic scientist," I replied.

Silence, then "Aw, right. It's Barry Allen. This is the Silver Age. Forget what I said. You know what you're doing."

"Even if no one else does," I concluded.

With the benefit of over 20 years of hindsight, I can understand how my proposal might have been regarded as the beginning and end of a story with a gulf between. A gulf to be filled with lots of unrelated bits. No three-act structure. No subtext. A fanboy celebration of the DC Universe at best. It could quite easily have been a mess.

K.C. may not have shared my vision, but we did share a love of DC's Silver Age. I'm absolutely certain that THE NAIL series wouldn't have happened without him. Also in retrospect, I suspect the months of delays and uncertainty challenged my ambition and allowed the disparate notions to percolate more successfully than if I'd started earlier. My only real regret about the entire process is that KC wasn't able to see the series through.

Well, maybe not my only regret. I would have liked to do a third arc. The Final Nail.

Alan Davis
2017



KANSAS. TWENTY-
FOUR YEARS AGO.

IT'S FLAT,
HONEY...

...AND I
DIDN'T REPLACE
THE SPARE. THIS
COULD TAKE AN
HOUR TO
FIX.

DON'T BOTHER,
JONATHAN.

I'M IN THE
MOOD TO STAY
HOME.

MARTHA
KENT, YOU'RE
SHAMELESS.

UH HUH.
SO WHAT SAY
WE JOURNEY INTO
SMALLVILLE
TOMORROW...

...IT
WASN'T AS
IF WE HAD
ANYTHING
IMPORTANT
TO DO
TODAY.

*For want of a nail
the shoe was lost,
for want of a shoe
the horse was lost,
for want of a horse
the knight was lost,
for want of a knight
the battle was lost.
So it was a kingdom was lost,
all for the want of a nail.*

*Colloquial adaptation of a verse by
George Herbert. (Jacula Prudentum 1651)*

METROPOLIS.
THE PRESENT.

METROPOLIS
HAS REELECTED
MAYOR LEX LUTHOR
BY A LANDSLIDE
MAJORITY, DESPITE
SENATE CRITICISM
OF HIS RADICAL
POLICIES--



THIS ELECTION HAS BEEN ABOUT FAR MORE THAN SIMPLY SELECTING CITY OFFICIALS.

IT IS ABOUT THE CITIZENS OF METROPOLIS' RIGHT TO LIVE IN FREEDOM, TO BE SECURE FROM THE MENACE POSED BY METAHUMANS.

MASKED VIGILANTE OR SUPERPOWERED CRIMINAL, THEY ARE EQUALLY DANGEROUS.

NEITHER WILL BE PERMITTED TO OPERATE IN METROPOLIS.

THAT WAS MAYOR LEX LUTHOR SPEAKING AFTER LAST NIGHT'S ELECTION RESULTS.

IN JUST TWO YEARS HIS CONTROVERSIAL ADMINISTRATION HAS TRANSFORMED METROPOLIS INTO A MODERN UTOPIA.

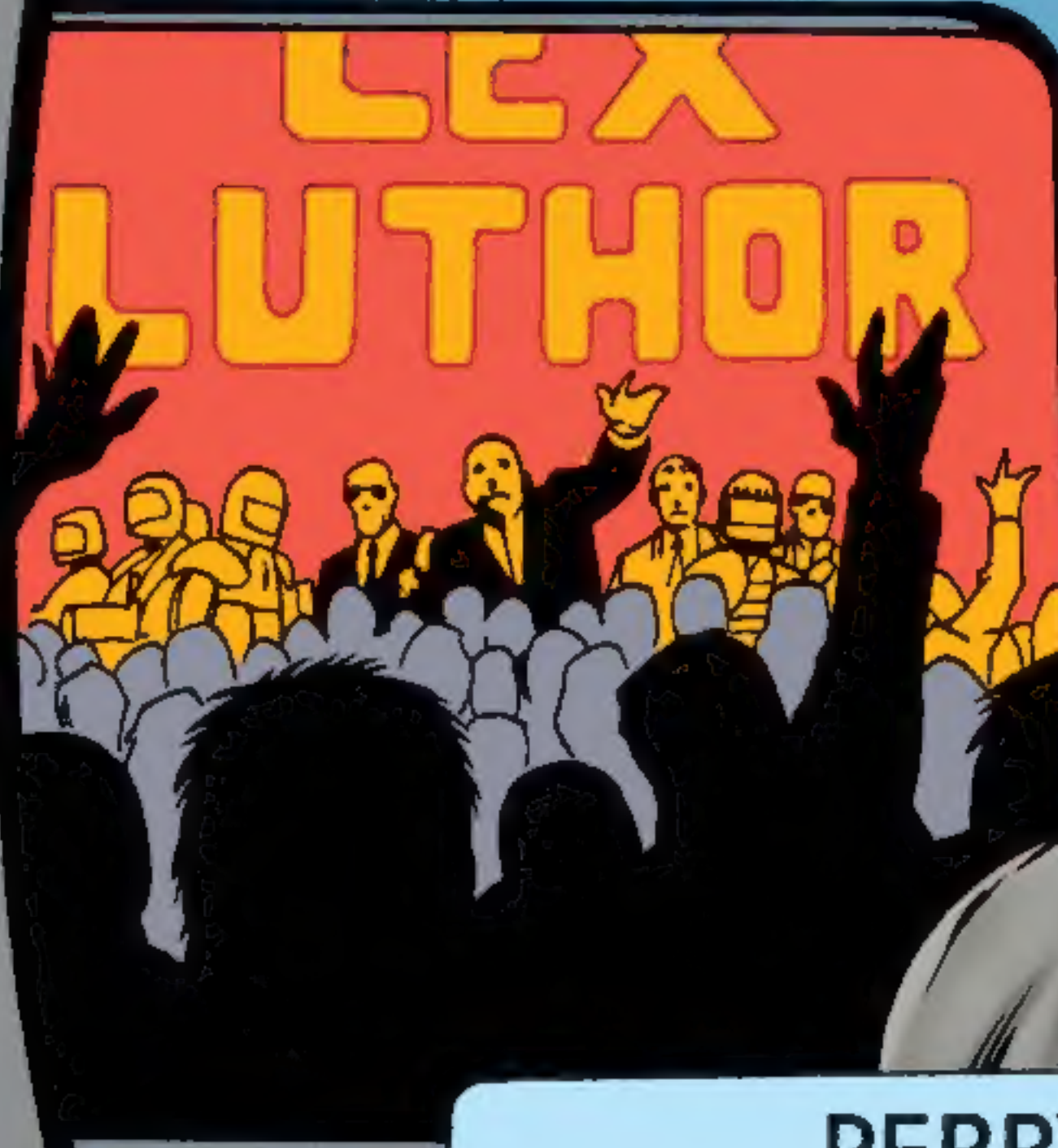
UNEMPLOYMENT AND TAXES ARE THE LOWEST IN AMERICA. EDUCATION AND MEDICAL CARE ARE THE HIGHEST.

BUT, MOST IMPRESSIVELY, CRIME IN GENERAL AND METAHUMAN CRIME IN PARTICULAR HAVE BEEN VIRTUALLY ELIMINATED.

WHILE CONGRESS CONTINUES TO DEBATE THE CONSTITUTIONAL RAMIFICATIONS OF LEGISLATION TO OUT-LAW METAHUMANS...

... POLITICIANS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE CONSULT WITH MAYOR LUTHOR FOR ADVICE AND THE TECHNOLOGY TO IMITATE HIS SUCCESS.

TO GIVE US AN INSIGHT ON THIS STORY I'M PLEASED TO WELCOME MAYOR LUTHOR'S AIDE...



PERRY WHITE

WGBS

...JIMMY OLSEN!

GLAD TO BE HERE, PERRY.

WGBS NEWS

I KNOW MANY VIEWERS WILL BE SURPRISED THAT SOMEONE OF YOUR TENDER AGE HAS ACHIEVED SUCH A SENIOR POSITION...

... SO WGBS PREPARED A VIDEO TO ILLUSTRATE WHY YOU ARE UNIQUELY QUALIFIED TO ADVISE ON METAHUMAN AFFAIRS.

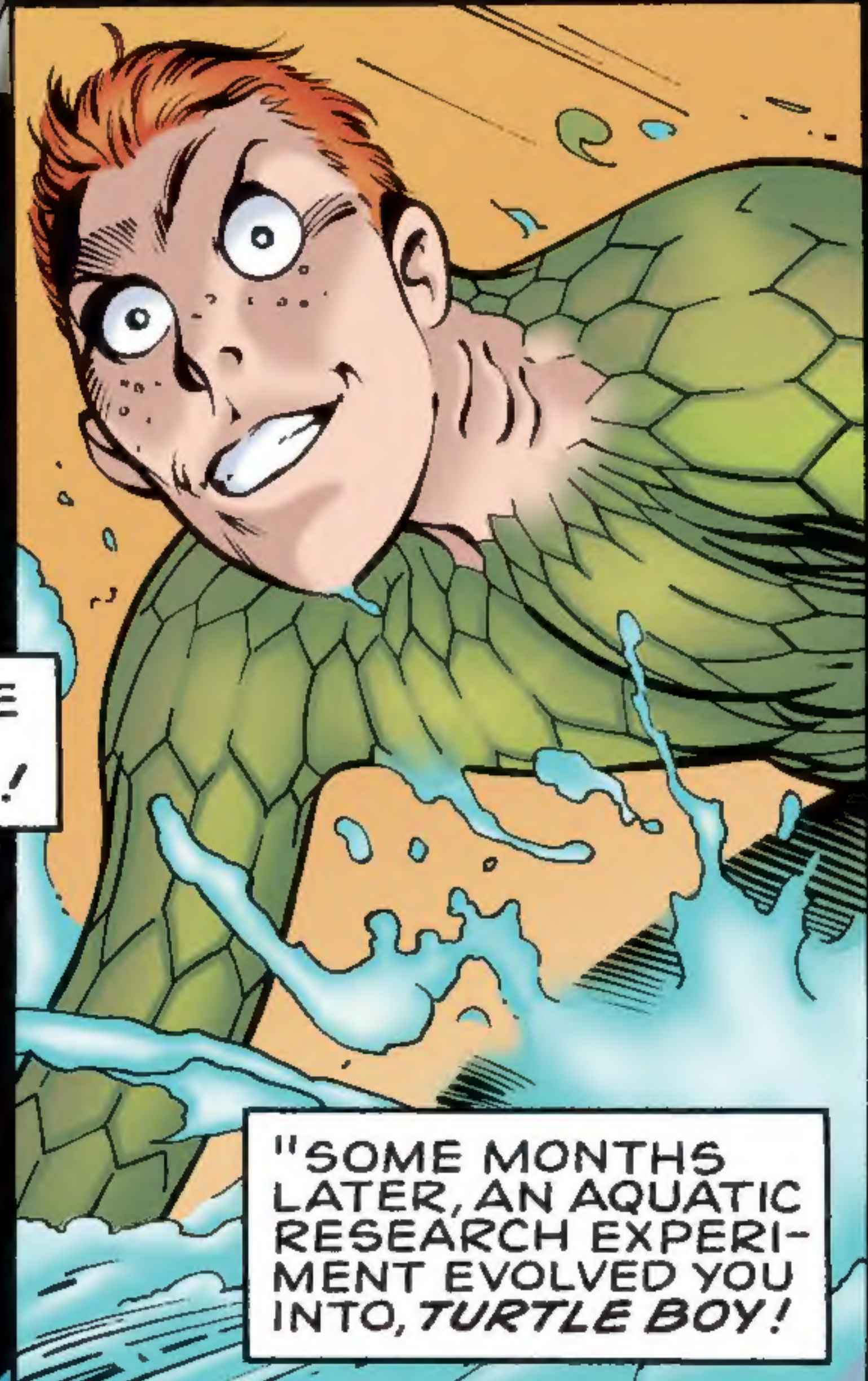
PERRY, YOU'RE CRUEL. THIS IS PAYBACK FOR THE GRIEF I CAUSED AS YOUR CUB REPORTER AT THE DAILY PLANET.



"FIRST, A CHEMICAL ACCIDENT BRIEFLY TRANSFORMED YOU INTO THE FIRE-BREATHING CRIME FIGHTER...



"...THE RED DEVIL!"



"SOME MONTHS LATER, AN AQUATIC RESEARCH EXPERIMENT EVOLVED YOU INTO, *TURTLE BOY*!"



"FINALLY, PROFESSOR PHINEAS POTTER TEMPORARILY META-MORPHOSED YOU INTO *ELASTIC LAD*!"

JIMMY, WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO TAKE SUCH RISKS TO BECOME A METAHUMAN CRIMEFIGHTER?

A MISGUIDED ATTEMPT TO EMULATE MY CHILDHOOD HEROES.

I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE BEHIND THE FACADE OF COSTUMED ADVENTURERS--

-- WHEN I FOUGHT ALONGSIDE THE JLA.

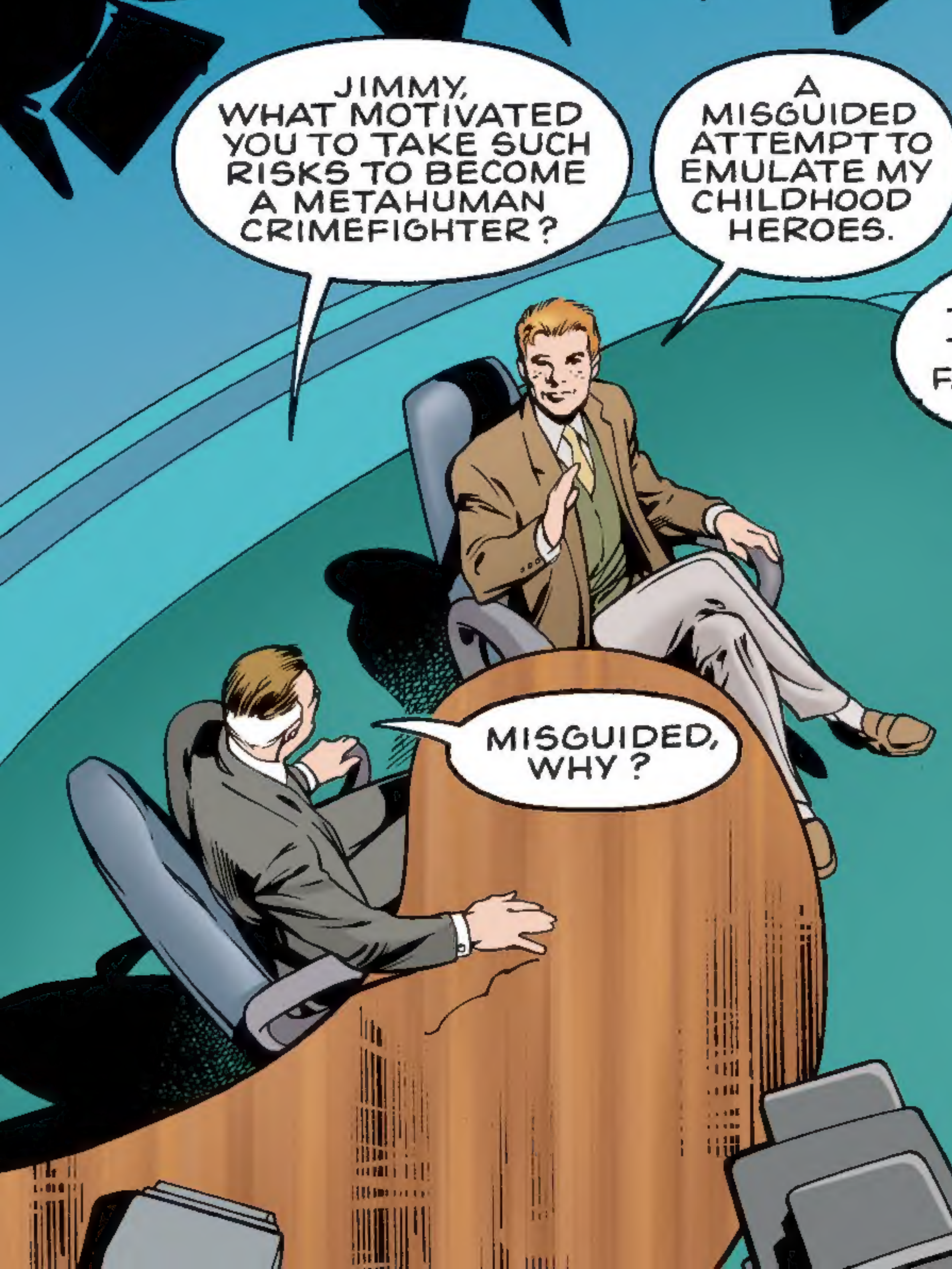
I DISCOVERED TRUE HEROES ARE EVERYDAY FOLK LIKE FIREFIGHTERS, PARAMEDICS, THE POLICE...

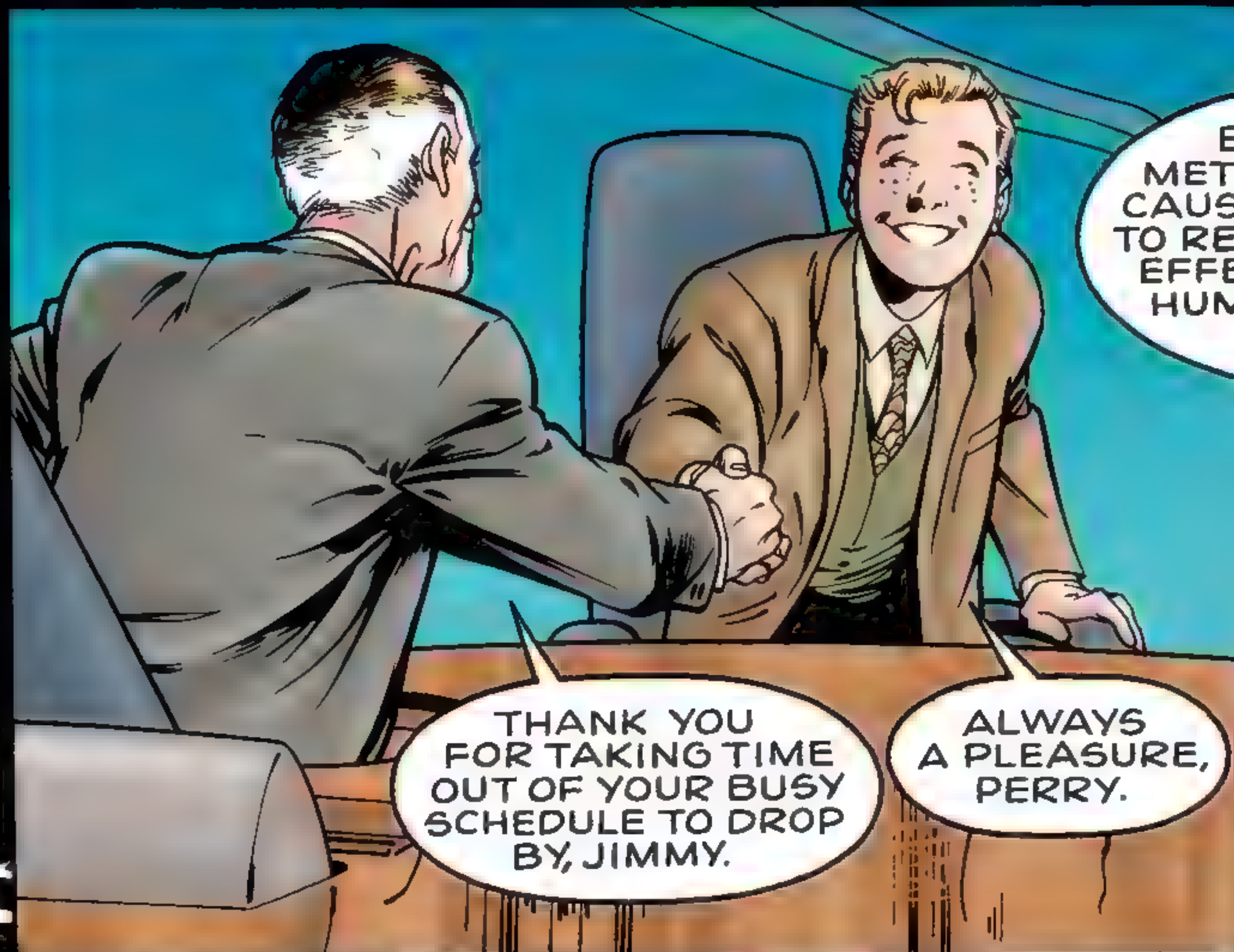
MISGUIDED, WHY?

JIMMY OLSEN DEPUTY MAYOR



... AND MEN LIKE MAYOR LUTHOR WHO ARE PREPARED TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF COMMON PEOPLE.





THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME OUT OF YOUR BUSY SCHEDULE TO DROP BY, JIMMY.

ALWAYS A PLEASURE, PERRY.

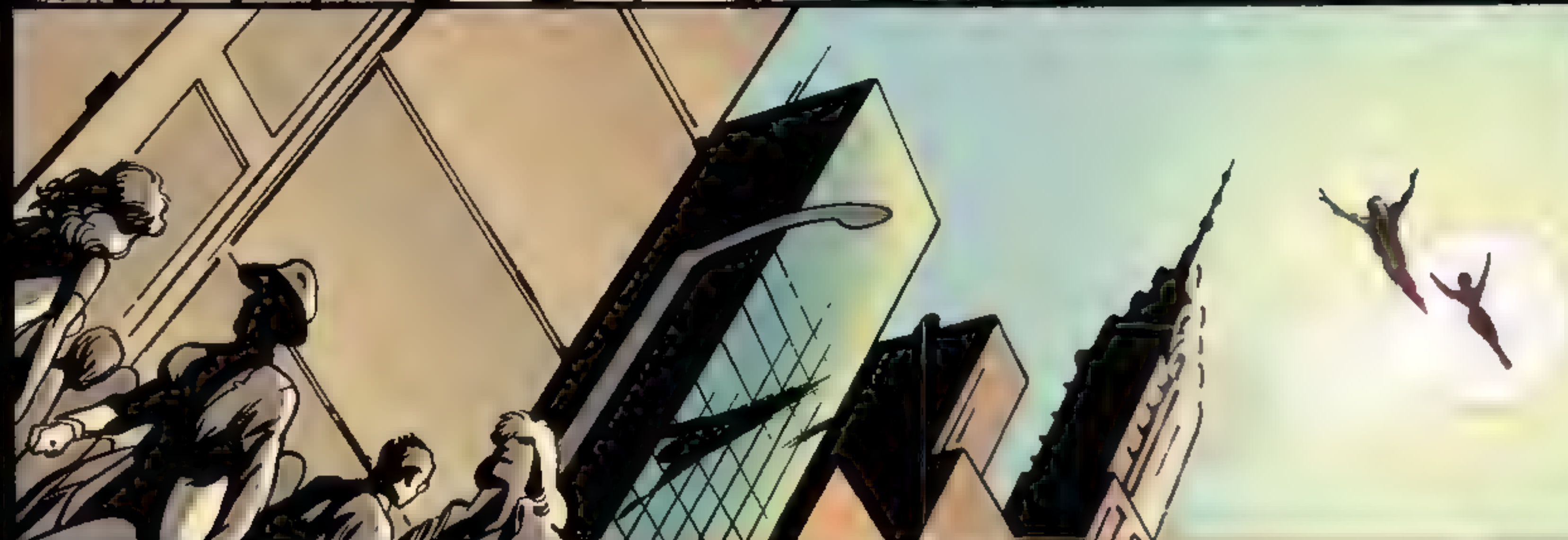


EVENTS IN METROPOLIS HAVE CAUSED THE WORLD TO REEVALUATE THE EFFECT OF META-HUMANS ON OUR SOCIETY.

THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HEROES, BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN WHO COME FORWARD IN TIME OF CRISIS.

"SO IT WAS IN MAN'S DARKEST HOUR WHEN THE FIRST META-HUMANS APPEARED.

"COSTUMED PATRIOTS WHO SYMBOLIZED OUR HEROIC IDEAL AND PROTECTED US FROM THE NATION'S ENEMIES.



"BUT WHEN THAT ENEMY WAS DEFEATED, THEY REMAINED AMONG US.

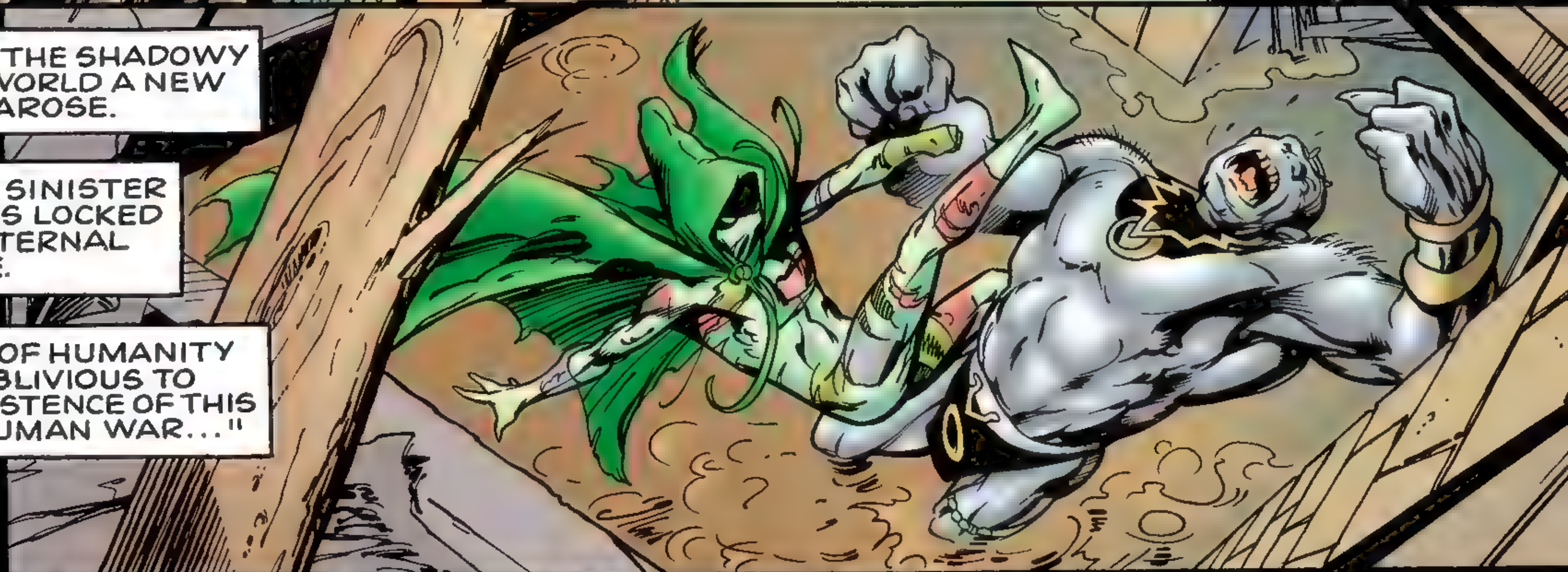
"MYSTERIOUS SENTINELS OF A HARD-WON PEACE.

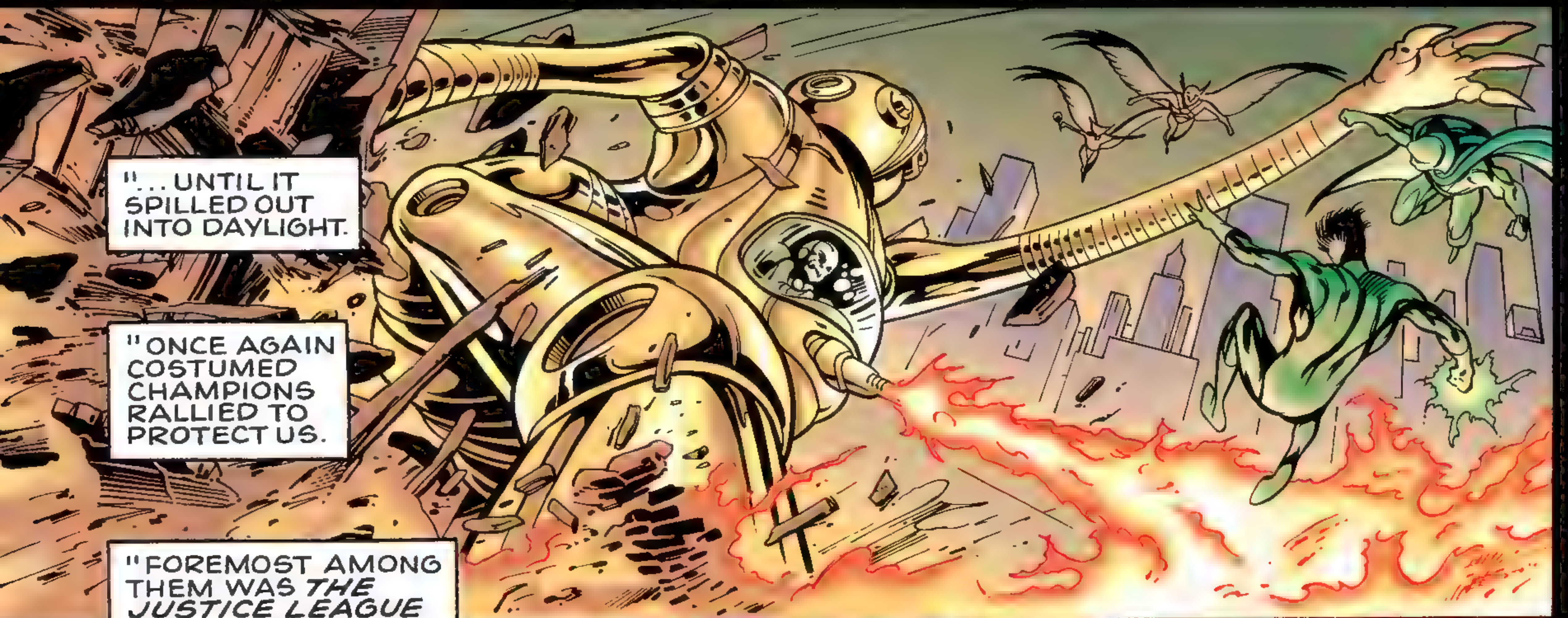
"THEY MADE US FEEL SAFE.

"BUT IN THE SHADOWY UNDERWORLD A NEW BREED AROSE.

"DARK, SINISTER ENTITIES LOCKED IN AN ETERNAL BATTLE.

"MOST OF HUMANITY WAS OBLIVIOUS TO THE EXISTENCE OF THIS METAHUMAN WAR..."

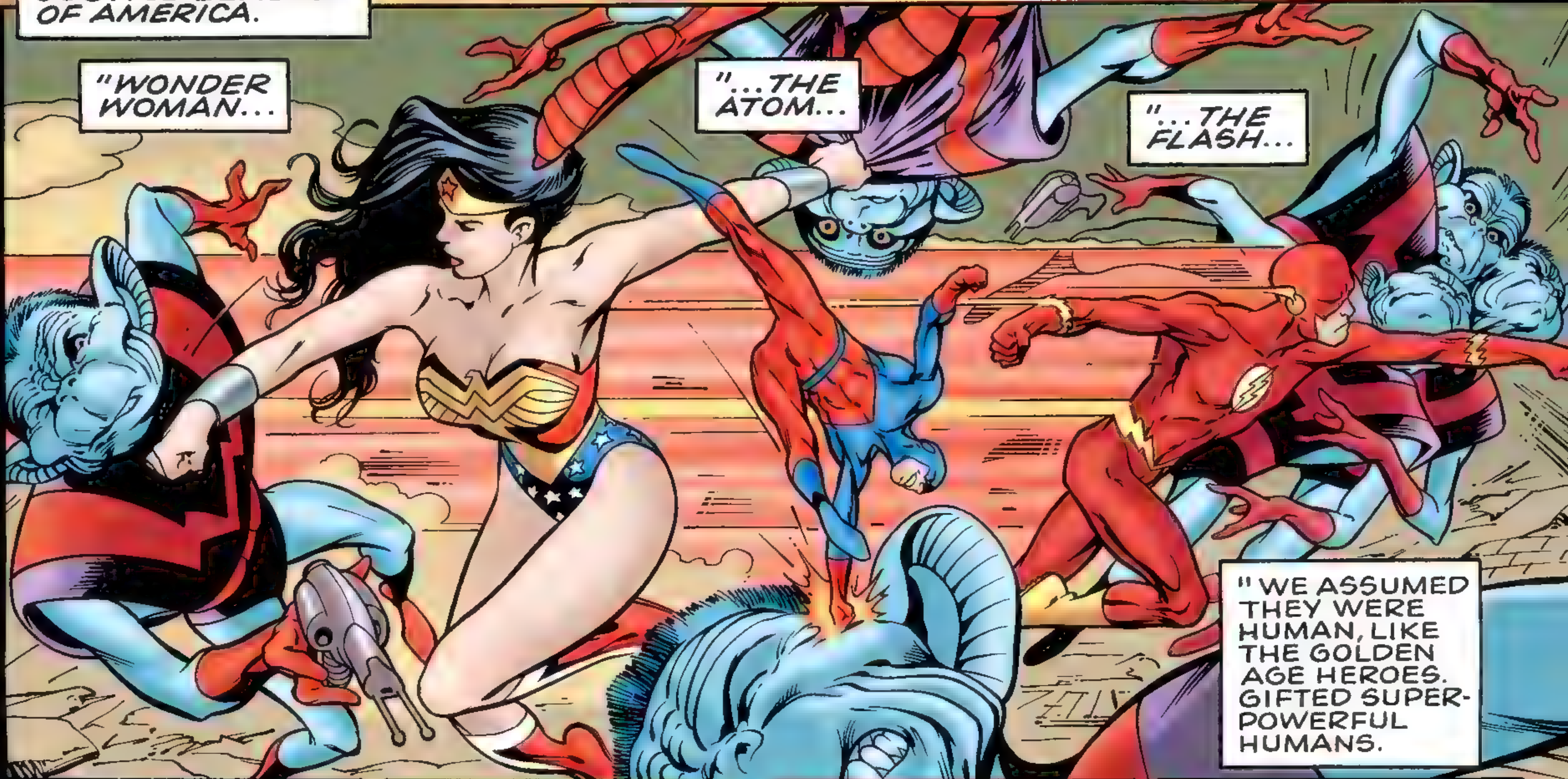




"...UNTIL IT
SPILLED OUT
INTO DAYLIGHT.

"ONCE AGAIN
COSTUMED
CHAMPIONS
RALLIED TO
PROTECT US.

"FOREMOST AMONG
THEM WAS THE
JUSTICE LEAGUE
OF AMERICA.

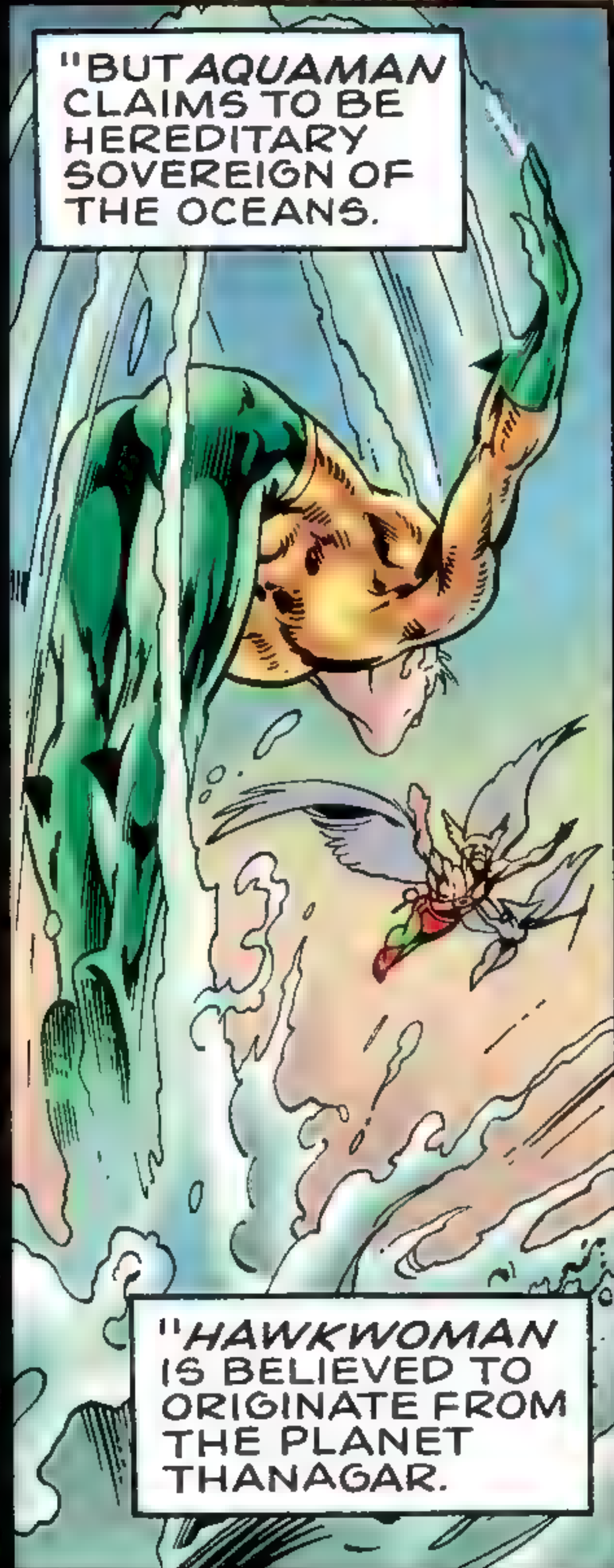


"WONDER
WOMAN...

"...THE
ATOM...

"...THE
FLASH...

"WE ASSUMED
THEY WERE
HUMAN, LIKE
THE GOLDEN
AGE HEROES.
GIFTED SUPER-
POWERFUL
HUMANS.



"BUT AQUAMAN
CLAIMS TO BE
HEREDITARY
SOVEREIGN OF
THE OCEANS.

"HAWKWOMAN
IS BELIEVED TO
ORIGINATE FROM
THE PLANET
THANAGAR.



"GREEN
LANTERN
WHO WIELDS
THE MOST
AWESOME
POWER...

"...IS AN AGENT
OF AN ALIEN
POLICE FORCE, THE
GUARDIANS OF
THE UNIVERSE.



"J'ONN J'ONZZ'S
SOBRIQUET, MARTIAN
MANHUNTER, BOASTS
AN INHUMAN
ORIGIN.



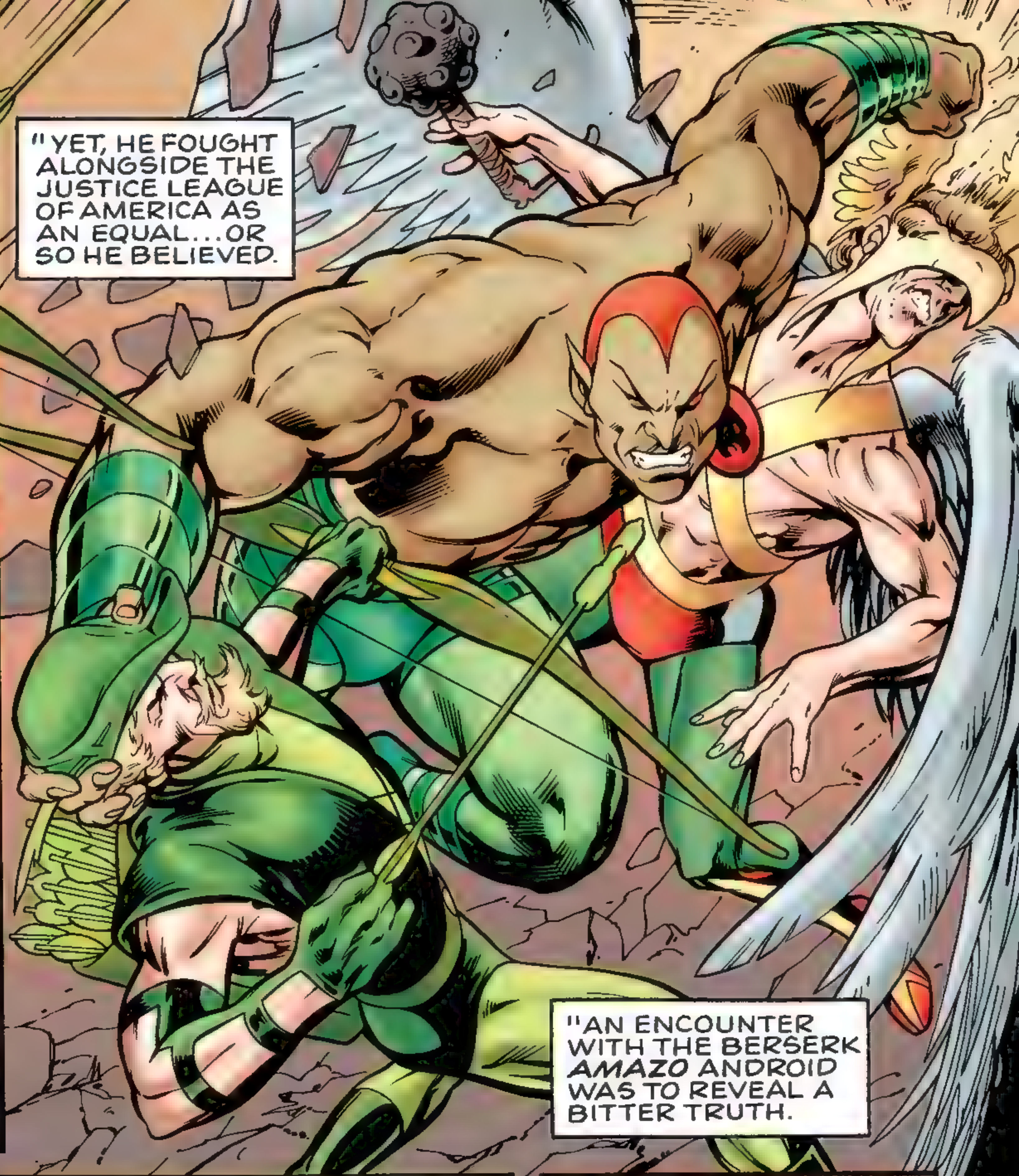
"AND THE
BATMAN!

"WHAT IS HIS
TRUE NATURE?

"ALIEN OR
DEMON? WE
CAN ONLY
SPECULATE."



"GREEN ARROW..."



"YET, HE FOUGHT ALONGSIDE THE JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA AS AN EQUAL...OR SO HE BELIEVED."

"AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE BERSERK AMAZO ANDROID WAS TO REVEAL A BITTER TRUTH."



"SOMETIMES A FEARLESS HEART IS NOT ENOUGH."



"THE JUSTICE LEAGUE DEFEATED AMAZO..."

"... AND HISTORY RECORDED ANOTHER HEROIC VICTORY. BUT WHAT OF GREEN ARROW ?"



"LIKE THE CASUALTIES OF ANY WAR, HE WAS QUICKLY FORGOTTEN."



BUT GREEN ARROW WAS AS VALIANT IN DEFEAT AS HE HAD BEEN IN VICTORY."



HIS IRON WILL OVERCAME HORRENDOUS INJURY AND HE RESUMED LIFE UNDER HIS TRUE NAME."

JOINING US NOW IN THE STUDIO, THE MAN WHO WAS GREEN ARROW..."

"...OLIVER
QUEEN!"

I ASSUME
FROM THE PHRASE
'MY SIDE OF THE STORY'
THAT YOU DISPUTE THE
JUSTICE LEAGUE'S
ACCOUNT.

JUSTICE
LEAGUE OF
AMERICA,
WHOSE
JUSTICE?

AND HOW
CAN THEY CLAIM
TO REPRESENT
AMERICA?

THEY
CONCEAL THEIR
IDENTITIES...

THANK YOU
FOR GIVING ME
THIS OPPORTUNITY
TO PRESENT MY SIDE
OF THE STORY,
MR. WHITE.

WE'RE
HONORED TO
HAVE YOU HERE,
SIR.

... AND REFUSE
TO ANSWER TO
ANY AMERICAN
AUTHORITY.

I THOUGHT
THEY WERE YOUR
FRIENDS?

SO DID
I, BUT THEN
I DISCOVERED
THE TRUTH.

THE
TRUTH?

THEY
TRIED TO
SILENCE ME
BECAUSE I
KNEW.

THE
META-HEROES'
WAR ON CRIME
IS A LIE!

A DEVIOUS
SCHEME TO MAKE
US BELIEVE WE
NEED THEM.

WHILE WE'RE
BEING GRATEFUL FOR
PROTECTING US FROM
THEIR COHORTS...

...THEY'RE
TAKING
OVER!

THE
METAHUMANS
ARE ALIEN
INVADERS...

... BUT THEY
DIDN'T NEED TO
CONQUER US, WE
WELCOMED THEM
WITH OPEN
ARMS.

SOME-
ONE MUST
BE MAKING
OLIVER SAY
THAT...

...HE
CAN'T BELIEVE
WE'RE HOSTILE
INVADERS.

HE MIGHT,
GREEN LANTERN. IT
COULD BE HIS WAY
OF COPING.

J'ONN'S
RIGHT. OLIVER
WAS ALWAYS
VERY PROUD.

HE
REJECTED
OUR HELP,
REFUSED TO
SEE US.

HE'S
OBVIOUSLY
GONE
INSANE.

PERHAPS,
BUT WE DID FAIL
HIM. WE SHOULD
HAVE DONE
MORE.

AND
WHAT OF
KATAR?

AMAZO
KILLED
HIM!





THE NEWS REPORT MADE NO MENTION OF HAWKMAN'S SERVICE TO MANKIND.

IT WAS AS IF HE HAD NEVER EXISTED.

DID MY HUSBAND DIE FOR NOTHING?



IT WASN'T A NEWS REPORT, HAWKWOMAN. IT WAS THINLY-VEILED PROPAGANDA.

PART OF AN ORGANIZED ANTI-METAHUMAN CAMPAIGN, I BELIEVE.



I HAVE BEEN NAIVE. I NEVER REALIZED MY PHYSICAL APPEARANCE COULD BE USED TO CATEGORIZE ME AS EVIL.



SOME PEOPLE FEAR ANYTHING THAT IS DIFFERENT, J'ONN. OUR POWERS SEPARATE US FROM ORDINARY PEOPLE.

EVEN TRULY HUMAN METAHUMANS ARE THE TARGET OF FEAR AND BIGOTRY.



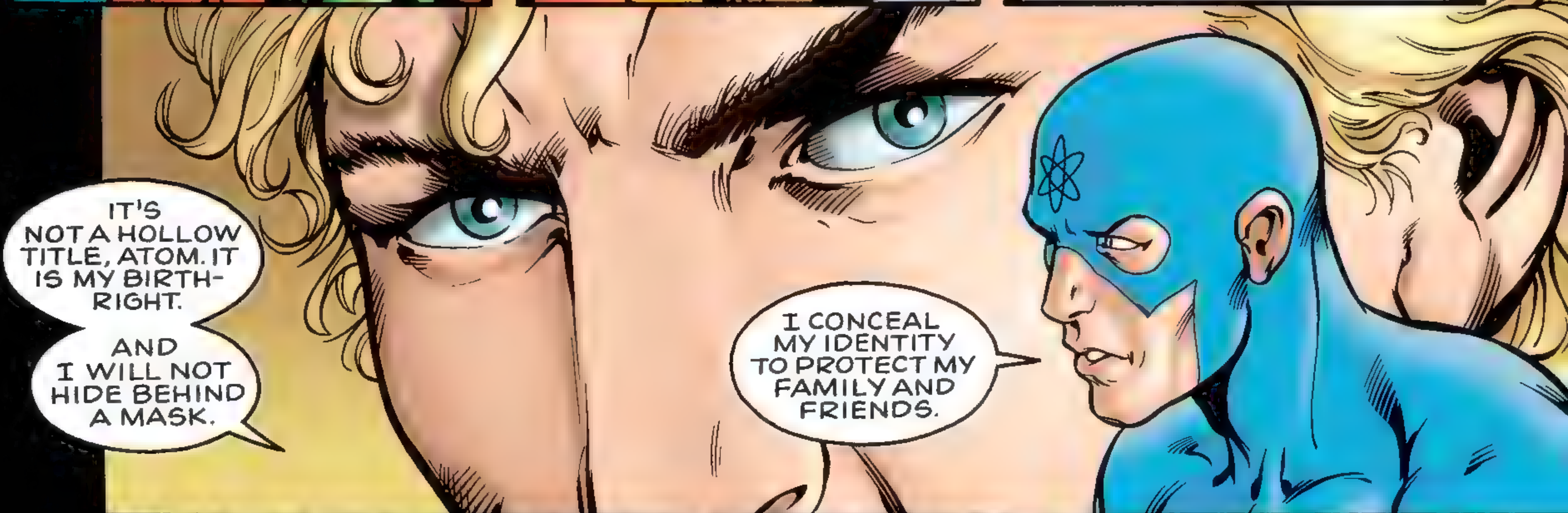
'TRULY HUMAN', FLASH? YOU SOUND LIKE THE BIGOTS WHO RIDICULE ME AS A FISH MAN.

SURELY I AM HALF HUMAN. MY FATHER WAS A SURFACE DWELLER.



YOU CAN'T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS, AQUAMAN.

YOU MADE YOURSELF A TARGET FOR JOKES BY CLAIMING TO BE SOVEREIGN OF THE SEVEN SEAS.



IT'S NOT A HOLLOW TITLE, ATOM. IT IS MY BIRTH-RIGHT.

AND I WILL NOT HIDE BEHIND A MASK.

I CONCEAL MY IDENTITY TO PROTECT MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS.





WHEN WE FORMED THE LEAGUE, WE AGREED TO HONOR THE SECRET IDENTITIES OF THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO USE ONE.



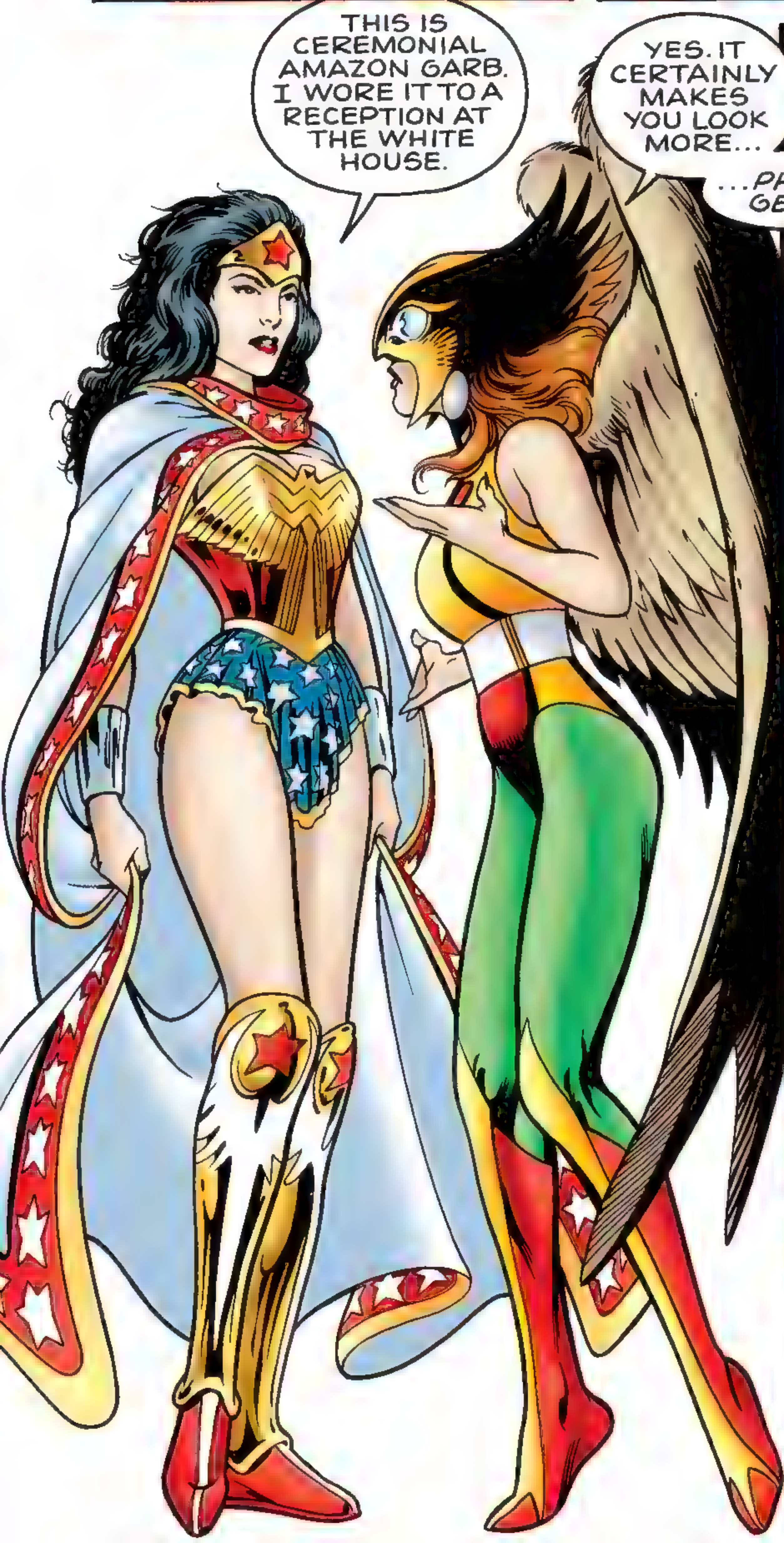
BUT MASKED ANONYMITY CAN BE USED TO CHARACTERIZE US AS VIGILANTES AND MONSTERS.

IT IS NOT ENOUGH FOR US TO VANQUISH EVIL.



WE MUST BE UNTAINTED SYMBOLS OF GOOD TO INSPIRE HUMANITY.

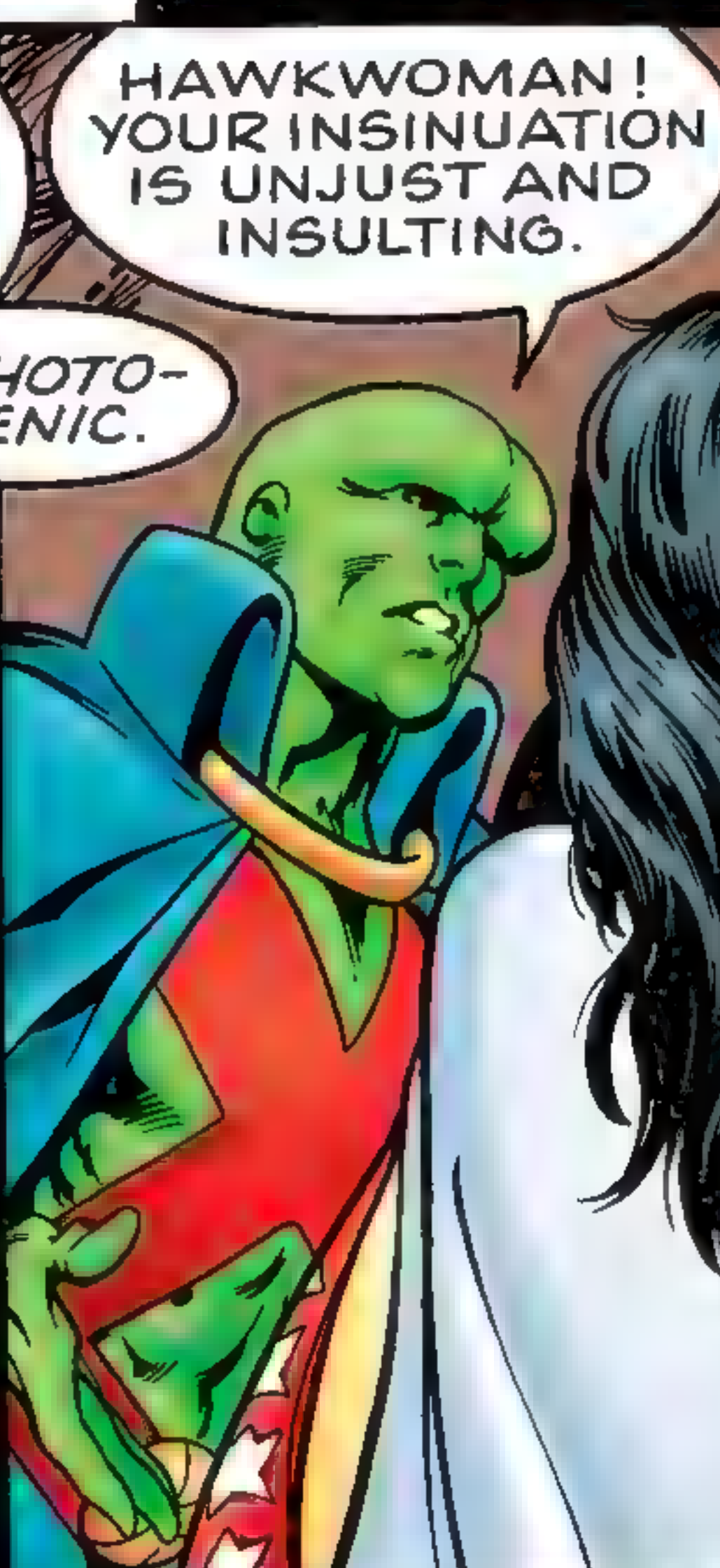
HOW? BY DRESSING UP FOR POLITICIANS?



THIS IS CEREMONIAL AMAZON GARB. I WORE IT TO A RECEPTION AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

YES. IT CERTAINLY MAKES YOU LOOK MORE...

...PHOTO-GENIC.



HAWKWOMAN! YOUR INSINUATION IS UNJUST AND INSULTING.

IT'S NOT THE COSTUME, IT'S WHAT IT REPRESENTS.

YES. WE DEFEND JUSTICE. NOT THE INTERESTS OF A FEW LAND-DWELLING POLITICIANS.



NOW WHO'S A BIGOT!

THEY'RE ELECTED OFFICIALS.

THEY WANT TO OUTLAW US.

WE HAVE PUBLIC SUPPORT.

THEY CONTROL PUBLIC OPINION.

WE MUST WORK WITHIN THE LAW.



THIRTY THOUSAND FEET ABOVE THE NORTH-WEST ATLANTIC.

...THE METAHUMANS ARE ALIEN INVADERS.

THIS ALL SEEMS HIGHLY ILLOGICAL.

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE FROM A PARALLEL DIMENSION, SHADE. YOU'RE AN ALIEN.

I THINK YOU ARE TEASING ME, **BLACK LIGHTNING**. THE MAN IN THE VIDEO IS A LUNATIC.

SHADE! OLIVER QUEEN WAS DINAH'S LOVER.

IT'S OKAY, **KATANA**. SHADE ONLY SAID WHAT WE'RE ALL THINKING.

BLACK CANARY, I INTENDED NO OFFENSE, BUT, WELL...

...YOU HAVE NOT SPOKEN OF THIS MAN SINCE I JOINED YOUR GROUP.

NO, IT'S IRONIC REALLY! OLIVER WAS THE REASON I FORMED THE **OUTSIDERS**.

I HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF THE JUSTICE LEAGUE... I RESIGNED AFTER THE AMAZO INCIDENT.

I DIDN'T BLAME THE OTHERS-- I WAS EQUALLY AT FAULT--

BUT OLIVER DID. HE WAS SO BITTER. FRUSTRATED BY HIS DISABILITY.

I FIGURED HIS OWN GROUP WOULD GIVE HIM A SENSE OF PURPOSE.

AS A LEADER. ORGANIZING, ADVISING, FORMULATING TACTICS...

PAUSE



HE SAID
HE FELT LIKE
A MASCOT.

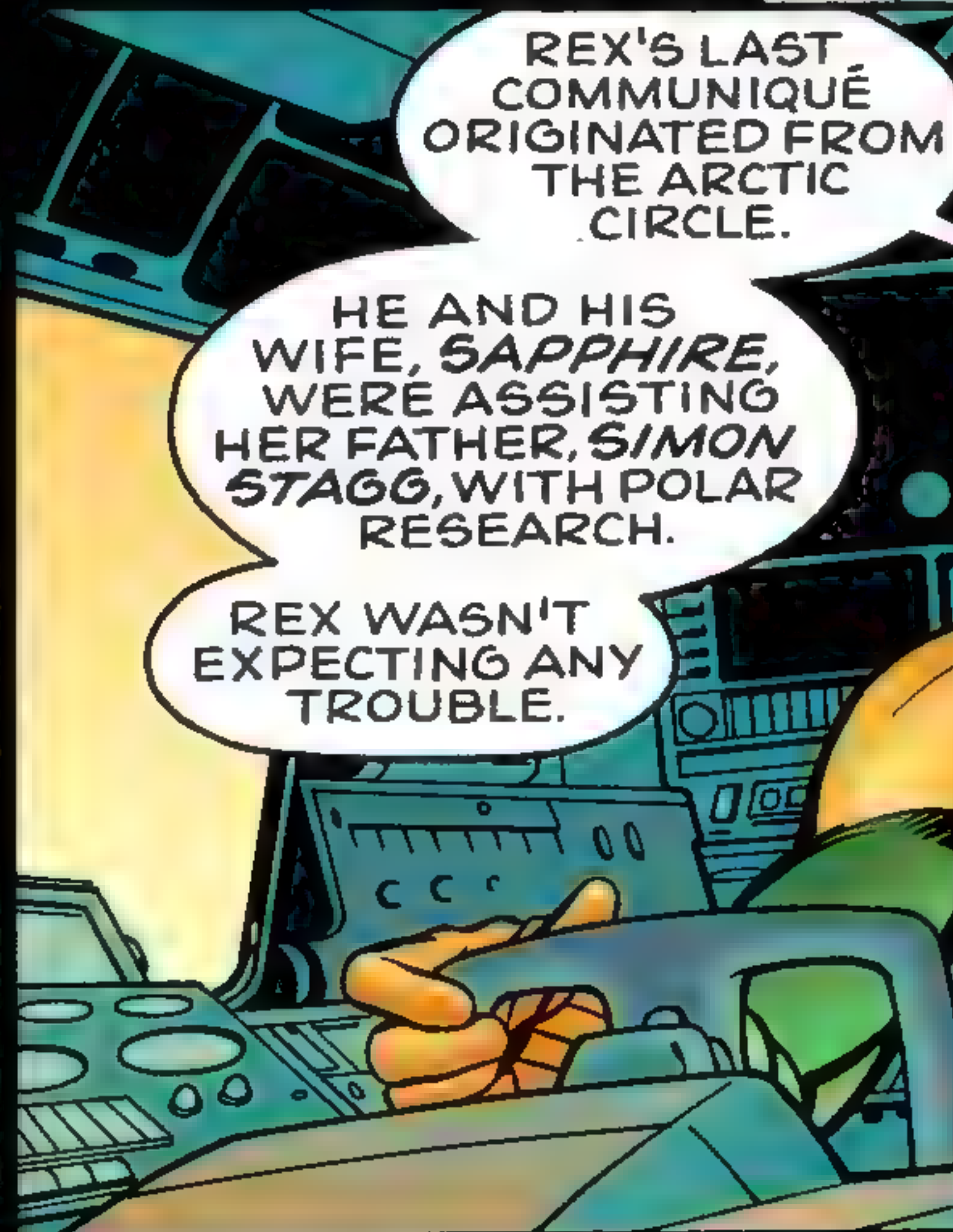
I HAVEN'T
SEEN HIM IN
MONTHS.



ANYWAY,
THIS IS NO
TIME TO BE
BROODING
ABOUT THE
PAST.

I'VE CALLED
YOU TOGETHER
BECAUSE I'M CON-
CERNED ABOUT
METAMORPHO.

HE HAS
FAILED TO LOG
ONTO OUR STATUS
WEBSITE FOR
ALMOST TWO
MONTHS.



REX'S LAST
COMMUNIQUE
ORIGINATED FROM
THE ARCTIC
CIRCLE.

HE AND HIS
WIFE, **SAPPHIRE**,
WERE ASSISTING
HER FATHER, **SIMON
STAGG**, WITH POLAR
RESEARCH.

REX WASN'T
EXPECTING ANY
TROUBLE.



YES, **GEO-
FORCE**. BUT **STAGG**
HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN
CROOKED DEALINGS
BEFORE.



THE
OUTSIDERS IS
AN ALLIANCE OF
LONERS.

THE
BASIC TENET OF
OUR CHARTER IS
THAT WE SUPPORT
EACH OTHER IF
ASKED...

...BUT WE DON'T
INTERFERE.



I'M PREPARED
TO RISK BREAKING
THAT RULE. I THINK
SOMETHING IS
BADLY WRONG...



...AND I'M
NEVER GOING TO
FAIL A TEAMMATE
AGAIN.

PAUSE

THE JLA HEAD-QUARTERS.

I KNOW YOU ALL BY REPUTATION AND I RESPECT AND ADMIRE WHAT YOU DO.

I WILL REPRESENT YOU AND ANY INFORMATION YOU REVEAL TO ME FAIRLY AND HONESTLY...

... BUT I AM NOT PREPARED TO PROMOTE PROPAGANDA.

I WOULDN'T BE HERE IF I THOUGHT YOU NEEDED IT.

THAT'S ALL VERY NOBLE, MISS LANE --

-- BUT I'M NOT INTERESTED IN ANY JOURNALIST'S OPINION OF MY ACTIONS.

UNLIKE YOU, BATMAN, THE REST OF US RELY ON A DEGREE OF PUBLIC GOODWILL TO OPERATE.

I'M FAR MORE CONCERNED WITH CAPTURING CRIMINALS THAN I AM WITH BAD PRESS REVIEWS.

THAT'S THE PROBLEM!

CRIMINALS FEAR ME. NOT INNOCENT PEOPLE.

YOU IMMERSE YOURSELF IN MYSTERY AND SUPERSTITION. THAT'S WHY YOU HAVE THE WORST PUBLIC IMAGE OF ALL.

YOU DELIBERATELY SCARE PEOPLE.

THE REAL SCARE MONGERS ARE JOURNALISTS, LIKE PERRY WHITE, WHO CULTIVATE FEAR TO INCREASE AUDIENCE RATINGS.



I WORKED WITH PERRY AT THE DAILY PLANET WHEN I FIRST BECAME A JOURNALIST.

HE'D NEVER BE INVOLVED IN ANYTHING CORRUPT.



THIS IS MORE THAN A RATINGS WAR BETWEEN NEWS NETWORKS.

I RECENTLY BECAME AWARE OF AN ANTI-METAHUMAN MOVEMENT.

YEAH! IT'S AN ACTUAL ORGANIZED SOCIETY DEVOTED TO HATING US AND IT'S GROWING.



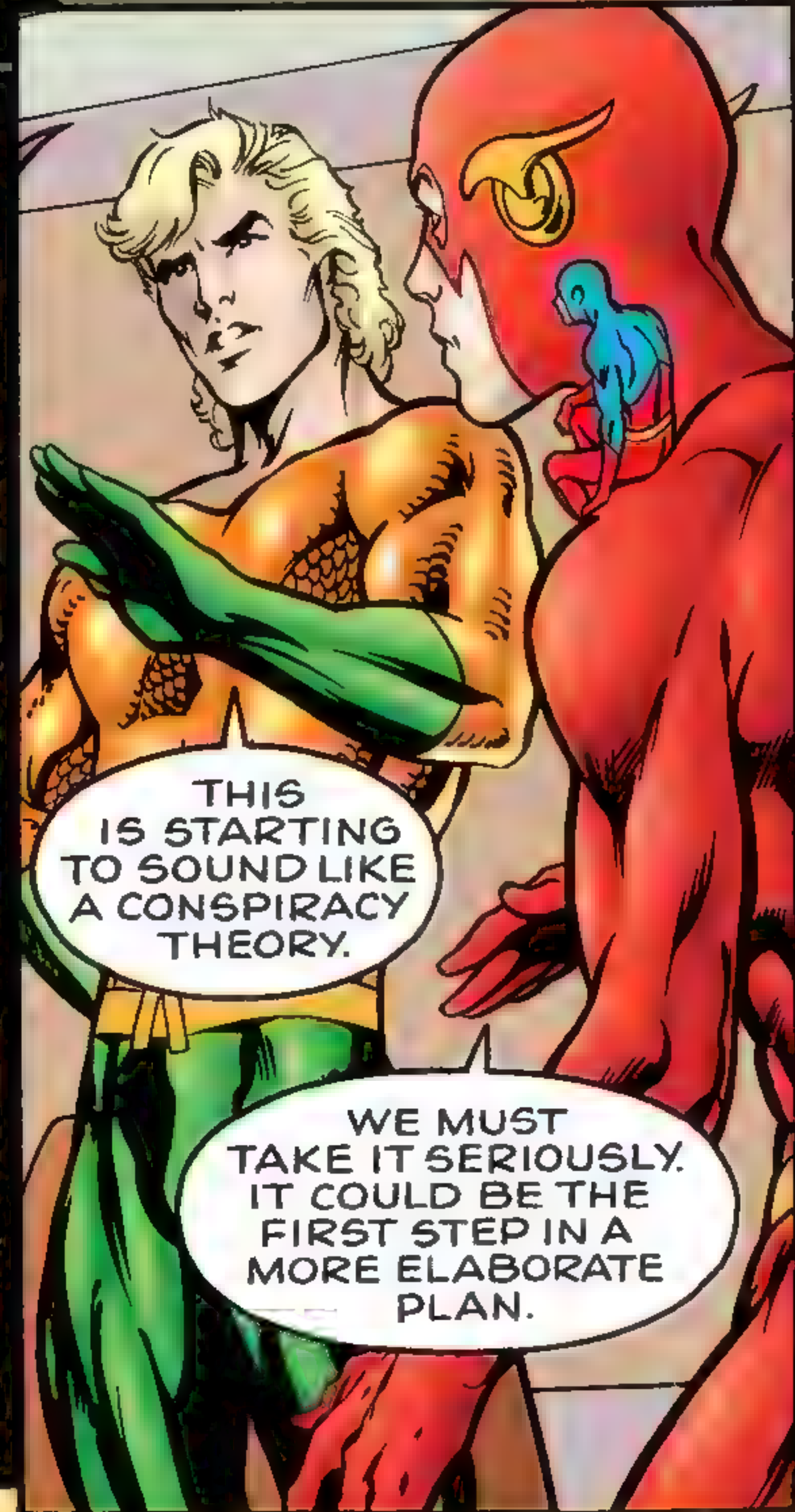
ARE THEY NOT MERELY POLITICAL EXTREMISTS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF MAYOR LUTHOR'S CAMPAIGN?

NO. THEY'RE TOO ORGANIZED.



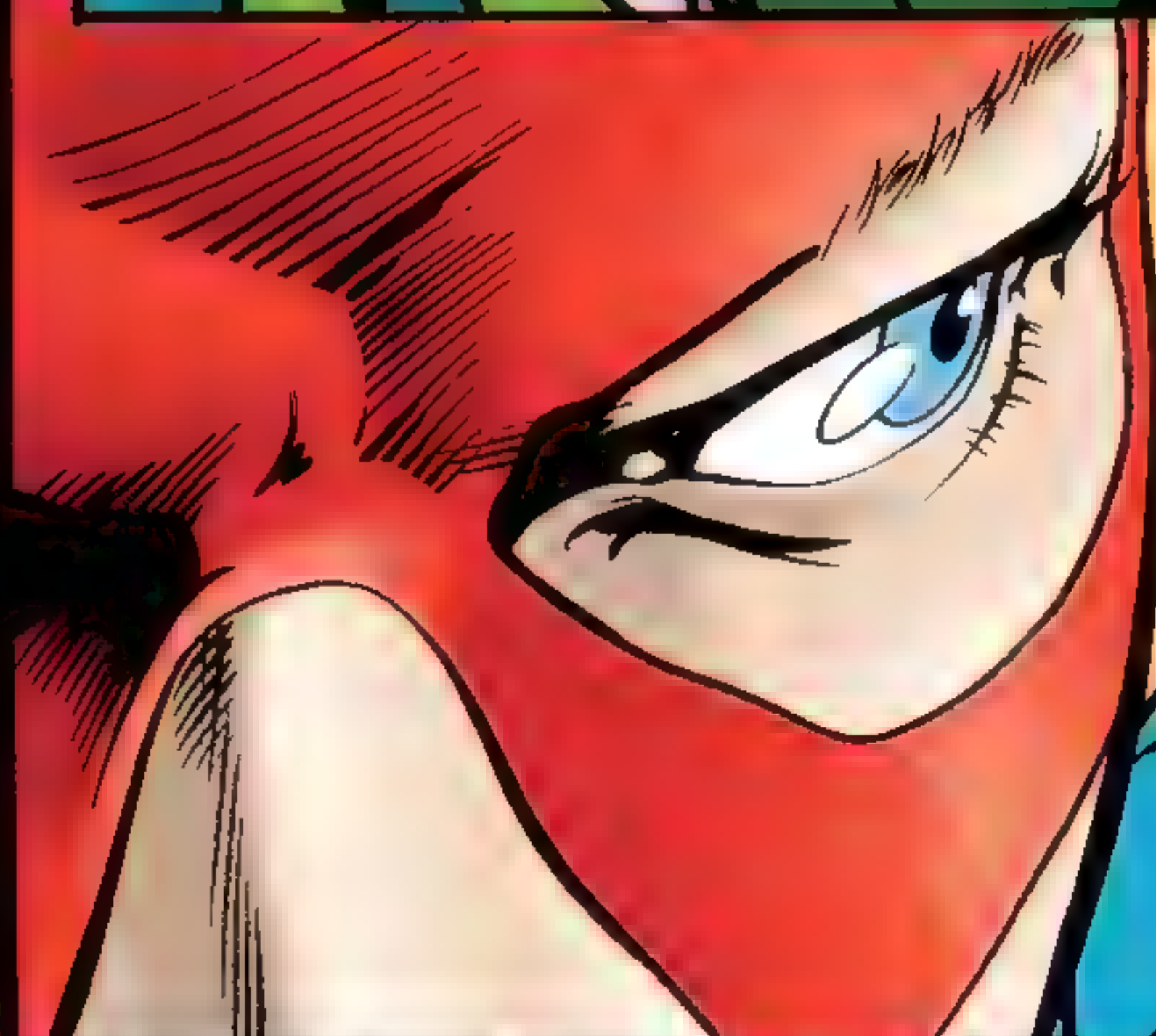
IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOMEONE COULD BE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS...

...TO UNDERMINE THE HEROIC IDEAL AND HINDER OUR ABILITY TO OPERATE.



THIS IS STARTING TO SOUND LIKE A CONSPIRACY THEORY.

WE MUST TAKE IT SERIOUSLY. IT COULD BE THE FIRST STEP IN A MORE ELABORATE PLAN.



IF YOU'RE RIGHT IT MUST BE SOMEONE WITH A LOT TO GAIN.

OR A SERIOUS GRUDGE. LIKE AN OLD FOE!

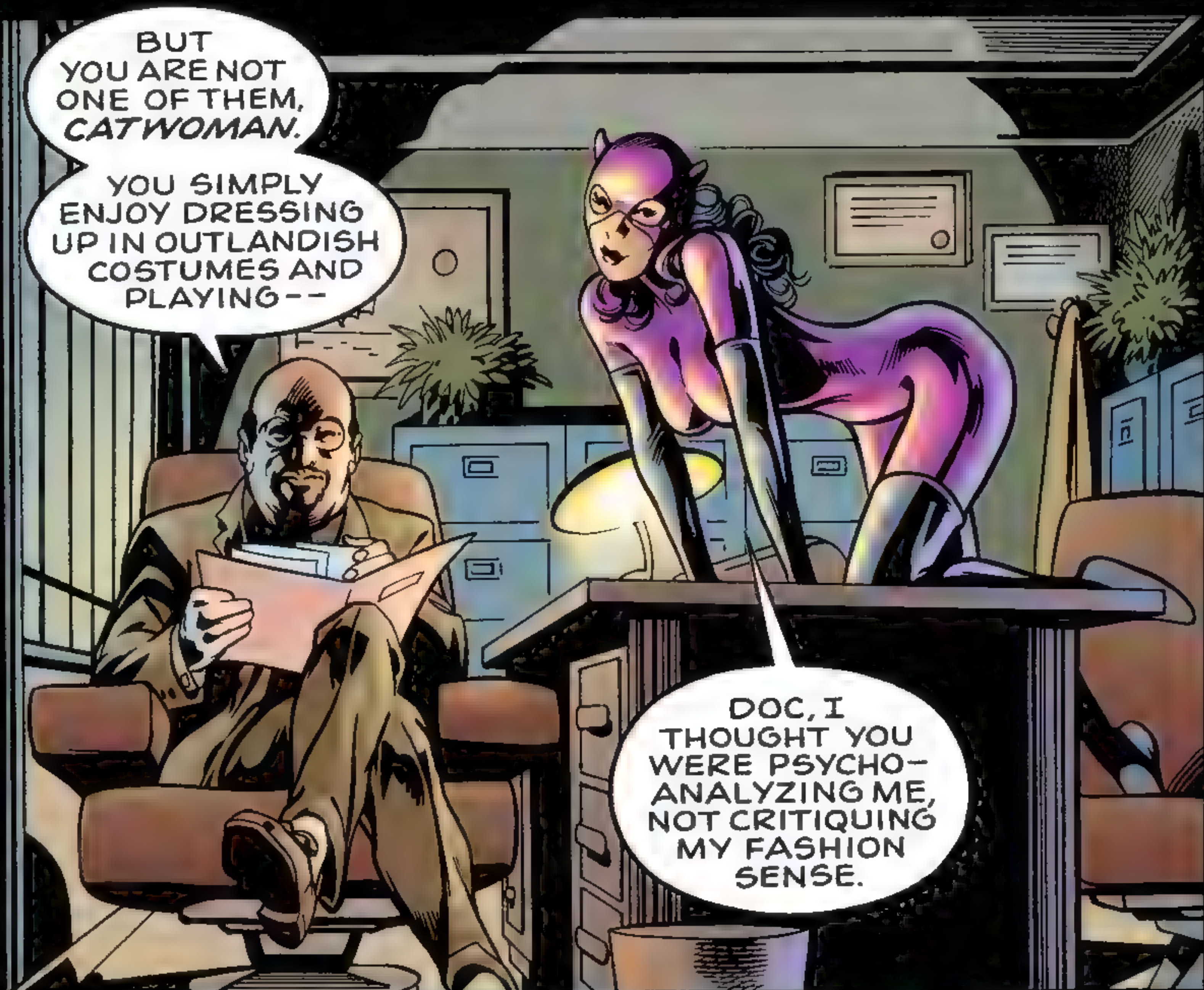
BUT WHO?



ARKHAM ASYLUM,
GOTHAM CITY.

THIS FACILITY
CONTAINS EVERY
KNOWN TYPE
OF DERANGED
CRIMINAL...

... AND A
FEW THAT DEFY
CATEGORIZATION.



BUT
YOU ARE NOT
ONE OF THEM,
CATWOMAN.

YOU SIMPLY
ENJOY DRESSING
UP IN OUTLANDISH
COSTUMES AND
PLAYING--

DOC, I
THOUGHT YOU
WERE PSYCHO-
ANALYZING ME,
NOT CRITIQUING
MY FASHION
SENSE.



ARE THOSE
PHOTOGRAPHS
FROM THE HOSPITAL
RECORDS...

...OR YOUR
OWN PRIVATE
COLLECTION?

AH...



EH...

AHEM...

AND, AS
I WAS SAYING,
PLAYING A CAT
AND MOUSE
GAME WITH
BATMAN.



WELL, A
BAT IS JUST A
MOUSE WITH
WINGS--

SO, YOU
BECAME
A CAT TO
PURSUE
HIM?



NO, DOC. I'M
THE SORT OF GIRL
MEN PURSUE. I JUST
HAD TO GET BATMAN
TO NOTICE ME.

A VERY
DANGEROUS
PLAY.

BATMAN
IS WORTH THE
RISK...



... AND
EVERYONE
IS INVITED!



JUSTICE LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS.

RA'S AL GHUL IS CAPABLE OF SUCH A SCHEME.

SO IS THE THINKER.

OR KOBRA.

OR SINESTRO?

THIS IS ALL VERY INTERESTING.

BUT I JOINED THE LEAGUE TO BECOME A MORE EFFECTIVE CRIME-FIGHTER...



...NOT TO JOIN A DISCUSSION GROUP AND WASTE TIME IN IDLE SPECULATION.

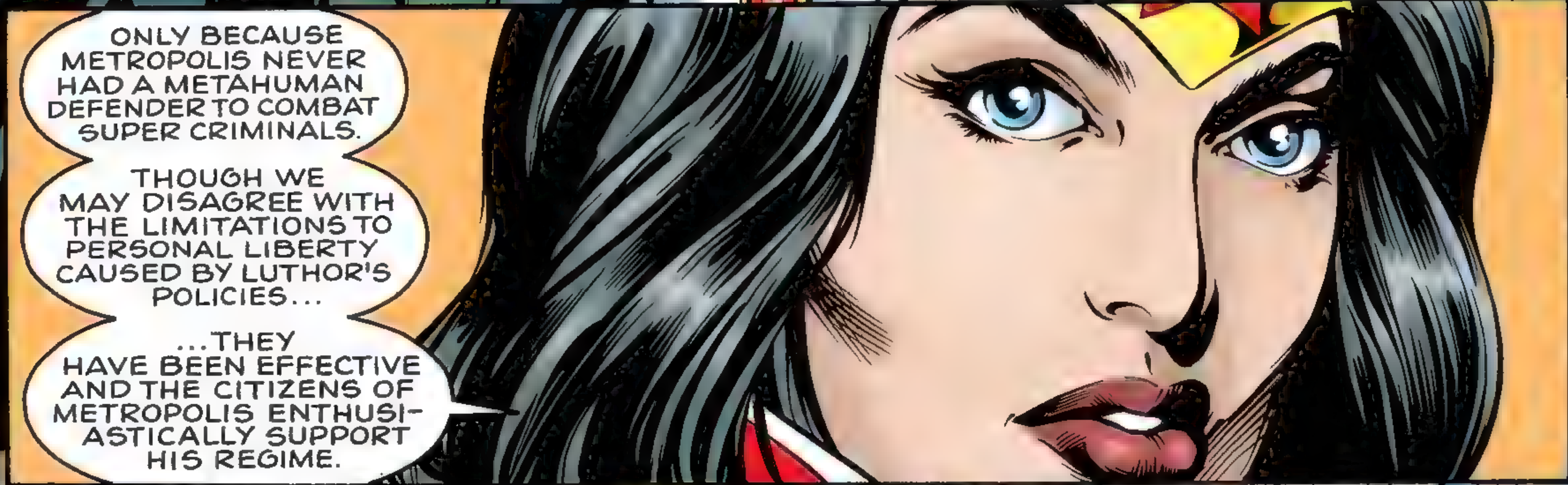
THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THE THEORY OF AN ORCHESTRATED HATE CAMPAIGN.



BATMAN IS RIGHT. IT MAY BE A FAD. SOMETHING TO BROADCAST IN A SLOW NEWS WEEK.

SUCCESS? HE CREATED A TECHNICALLY ADVANCED POLICE STATE.

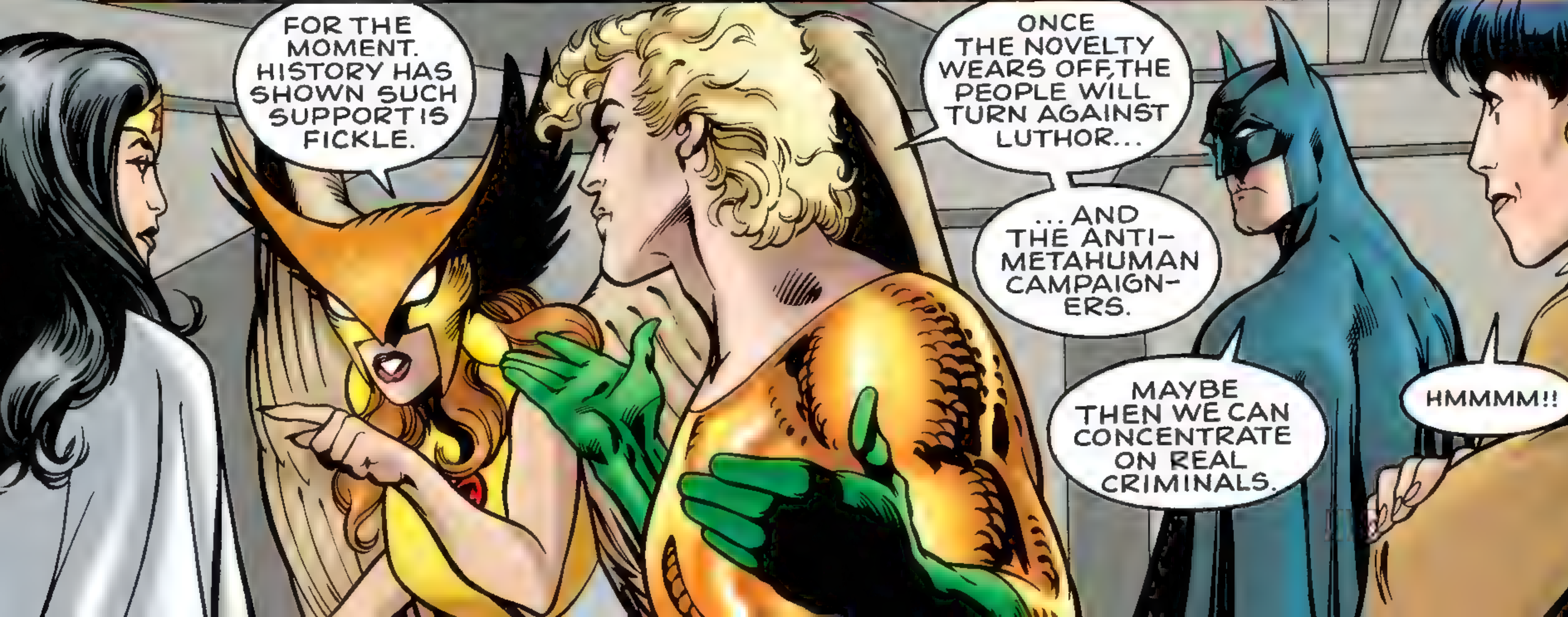
THE MEDIA ORIGINALLY ATTACKED MAYOR LUTHOR'S METHODS. NOW THEY PRAISE HIS SUCCESS.



ONLY BECAUSE METROPOLIS NEVER HAD A METAHUMAN DEFENDER TO COMBAT SUPER CRIMINALS.

THOUGH WE MAY DISAGREE WITH THE LIMITATIONS TO PERSONAL LIBERTY CAUSED BY LUTHOR'S POLICIES...

...THEY HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE AND THE CITIZENS OF METROPOLIS ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORT HIS REGIME.



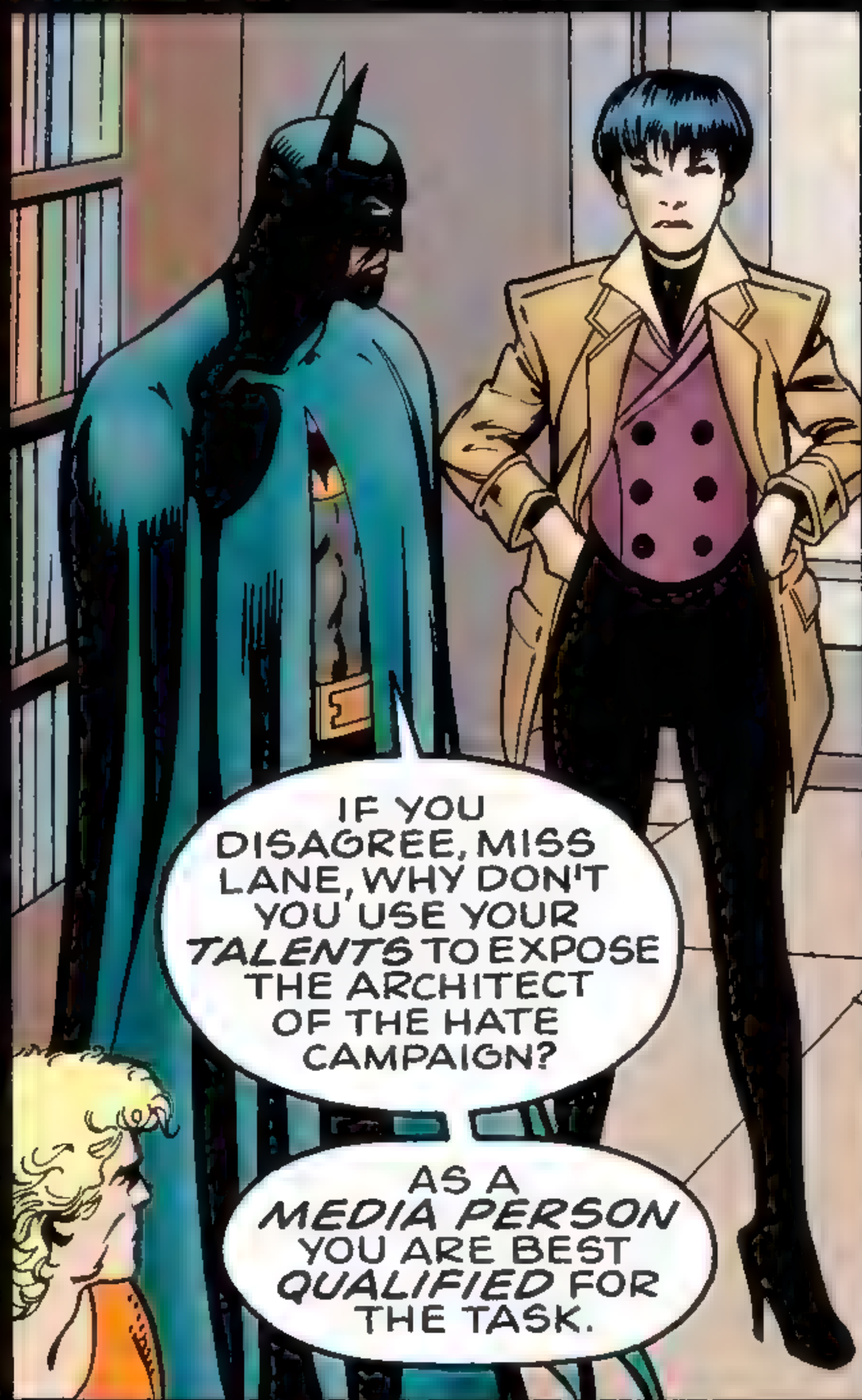
FOR THE MOMENT. HISTORY HAS SHOWN SUCH SUPPORT IS FICKLE.

ONCE THE NOVELTY WEARS OFF, THE PEOPLE WILL TURN AGAINST LUTHOR...

...AND THE ANTI-METAHUMAN CAMPAIGNERS.

MAYBE THEN WE CAN CONCENTRATE ON REAL CRIMINALS.

HMMMM!!



"...MEETING
ADJOURNED."

IT'S OKAY. I
UNDERSTAND THE
NEED TO KEEP THE
LOCATION OF YOUR
HEADQUARTERS
SECRET.

BUT WHAT I
CANNOT UNDER-
STAND IS WHY YOU
ASSOCIATE WITH
BATMAN.

LOIS,
I'M SORRY FOR
ALL THIS CLOAK
AND DAGGER
STUFF...

... I'LL MAKE
THE BUBBLE
TRANSPARENT
AS SOON AS
WE'RE CLEAR.

DESPITE
HIS DEMEANOR,
HE'S A GOOD GUY--
ONE OF THE VERY
BEST.

HE'S SINISTER!
OBSESSED!
RUTHLESS!
CRUEL--

NO. NOT
CRUEL. IF ANY-
THING, BATMAN
CARES TOO
MUCH.

HE'S
DEDICATED.
DISCIPLINED.
A BRILLIANT
CRIMINOLOGIST
AND SUPERB
MARTIAL
ARTIST.

THEN
IT'S TRUE...
HE ~~ISN'T~~ A
METAHUMAN.
I HEARD A
RUMOR--

BUT
YOU DIDN'T
BELIEVE IT.
NO ONE EVER
DOES. THAT'S
HIS ONLY
EDGE.

OKAY, I
MAY HAVE
BEEN HARSH,
BUT I'M A
REALIST...

... AND
IT SEEMS NOW,
MORE THAN EVER,
THE WORLD NEEDS
SOMEONE PEOPLE
CAN TRUST AND
BELIEVE IN.

SOMEONE TO
SET STANDARDS
TO WHICH OTHERS
CAN ASPIRE.

A CHAMPION OF
TRUTH AND
JUSTICE.

THE TRUTH BEHIND
THE MASK

OUTLAW
ALIENS

STAR CITY.

HAVE I FAILED TO BE A SYMBOL OF TRUTH AND JUSTICE?

AM I A PAWN OF POLITICIANS? WINDOW DRESSING FOR THEIR PHOTO OP?

HAWKWOMAN WAS ANGRY AND UPSET, DIANA.



THAT DOESN'T MAKE HER COMMENTS LESS VALID.

I CAME TO THIS LAND AS AN AMBASSADOR FROM THE AMAZON WOMEN OF PARADISE ISLAND...

...TO TEACH THE WAYS OF COMPASSION AND JUSTICE...



BUT MY MESSAGE HAS FALLEN ON DEAF EARS.

NOT SO, DIANA. YOU ARE THE SPIRITUAL HEART OF THE LEAGUE. THE MOST TRUSTED AND RESPECTED...



...WHILE I AM DESPISED FOR MY IN-HUMANITY.

J'ONN, YOU HAVE MORE HUMANITY THAN MOST HUMANS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND WORDS, BUT...

...I PLAN TO RETIRE FROM THE PUBLIC ARENA UNTIL THE CURRENT HYSTERIA SUBSIDES.



NOT A PROBLEM FOR ONE POSSESSING THE POWER TO BECOME INVISIBLE.

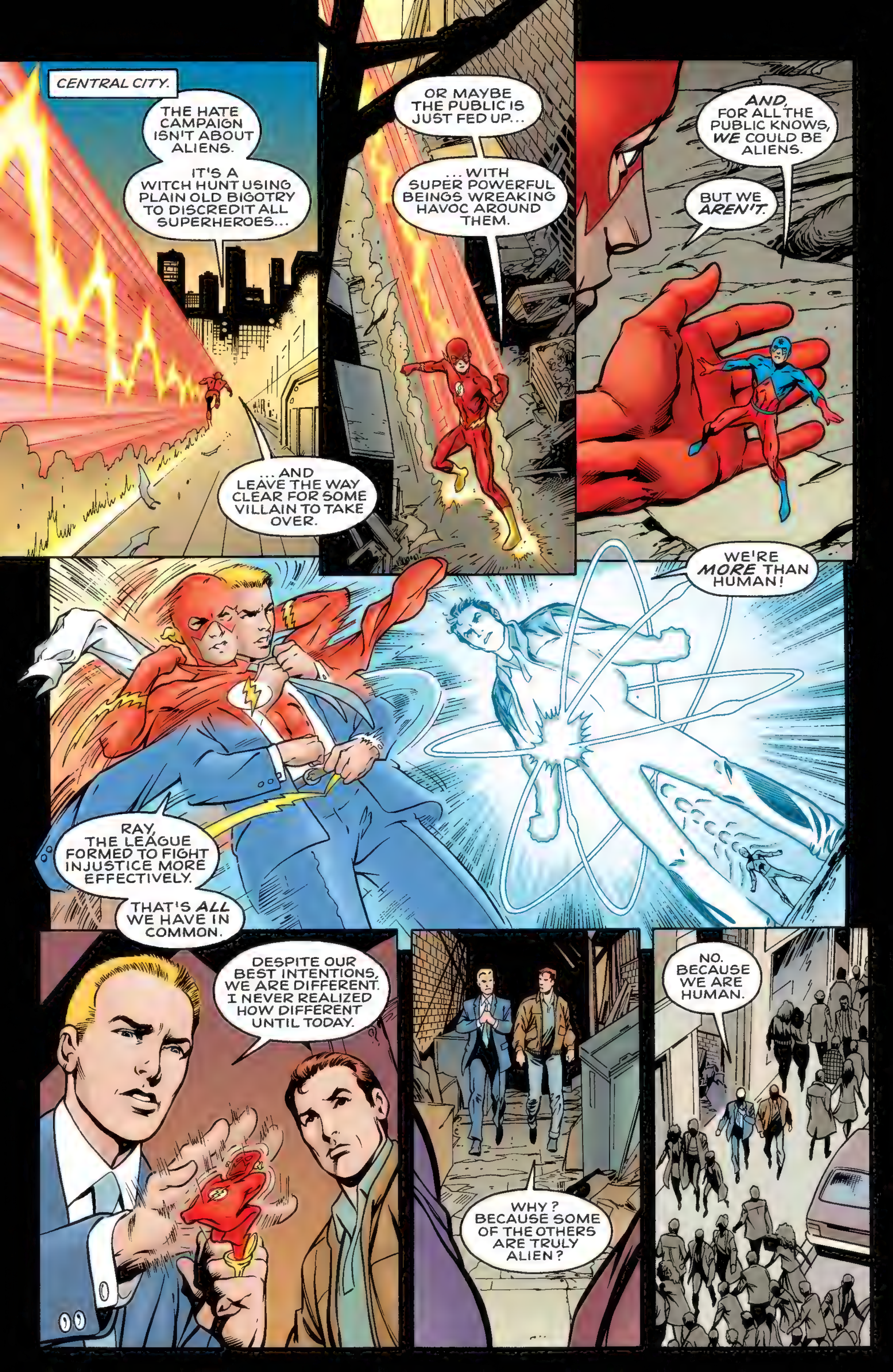


BUT, J'ONN--



IT IS IN THE LEAGUE'S BEST INTERESTS, DIANA.

ATHENA BE WITH YOU, MY FRIEND.



CENTRAL CITY.

THE HATE
CAMPAIGN
ISN'T ABOUT
ALIENS.

IT'S A
WITCH HUNT USING
PLAIN OLD BIGOTRY
TO DISCREDIT ALL
SUPERHEROES...

... AND
LEAVE THE WAY
CLEAR FOR SOME
VILLAIN TO TAKE
OVER.

OR MAYBE
THE PUBLIC IS
JUST FED UP...

... WITH
SUPER POWERFUL
BEINGS WREAKING
HAVOC AROUND
THEM.

AND,
FOR ALL THE
PUBLIC KNOWS,
WE COULD BE
ALIENS.

BUT WE
AREN'T.

WE'RE
MORE THAN
HUMAN!

RAY,
THE LEAGUE
FORMED TO FIGHT
INJUSTICE MORE
EFFECTIVELY.

THAT'S ALL
WE HAVE IN
COMMON.

DESPITE OUR
BEST INTENTIONS,
WE ARE DIFFERENT.
I NEVER REALIZED
HOW DIFFERENT
UNTIL TODAY.

WHY?
BECAUSE SOME
OF THE OTHERS
ARE TRULY
ALIEN?

NO.
BECAUSE
WE ARE
HUMAN.



CODSVILLE,
MAINE.

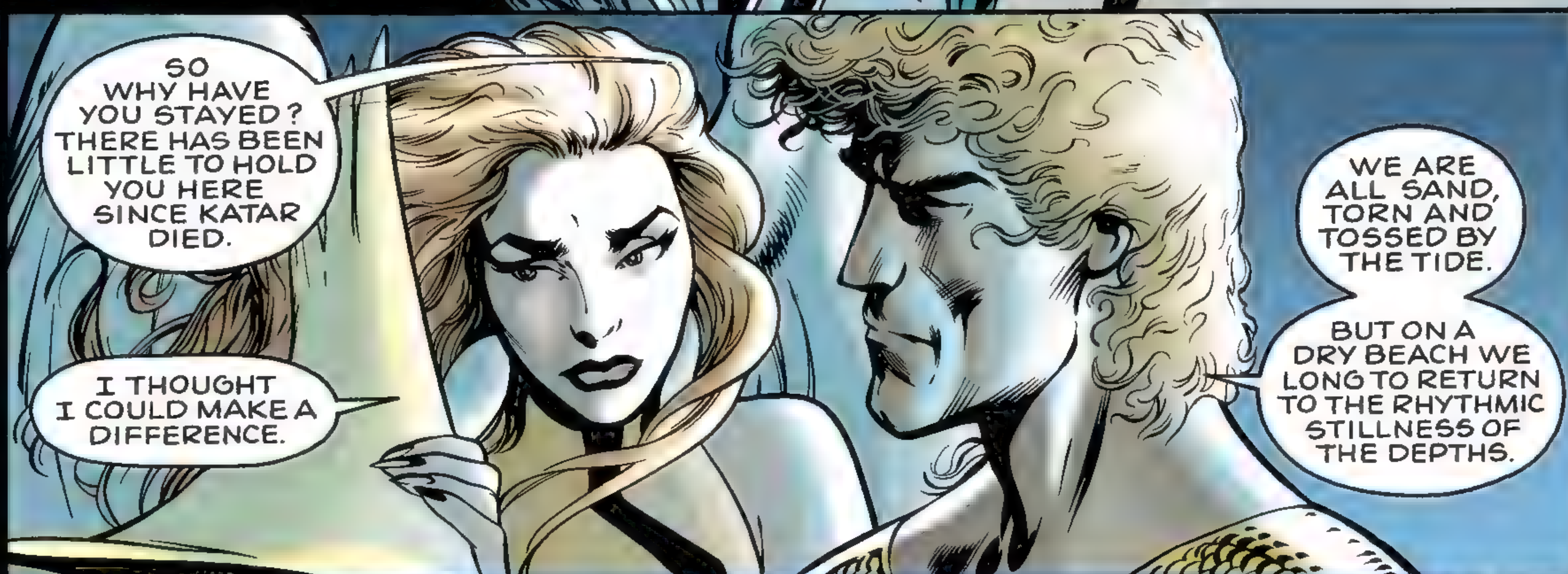
I MAY
APPEAR MORE
HUMAN THAN
J'ONN, BUT
I'M NOT.

I AM A
NATIVE OF
PLANET EARTH,
BUT I FEEL NO
LESS ALIEN THAN
YOU ON DRY
LAND.

THE SEA
IS MY FIRST
HOME.

YOUR TWO
WORLDS ARE ONLY
SEPARATED BY THE
SURF.

MY
HOMEWORLD,
THANAGAR, IS
LIGHT YEARS
AWAY.

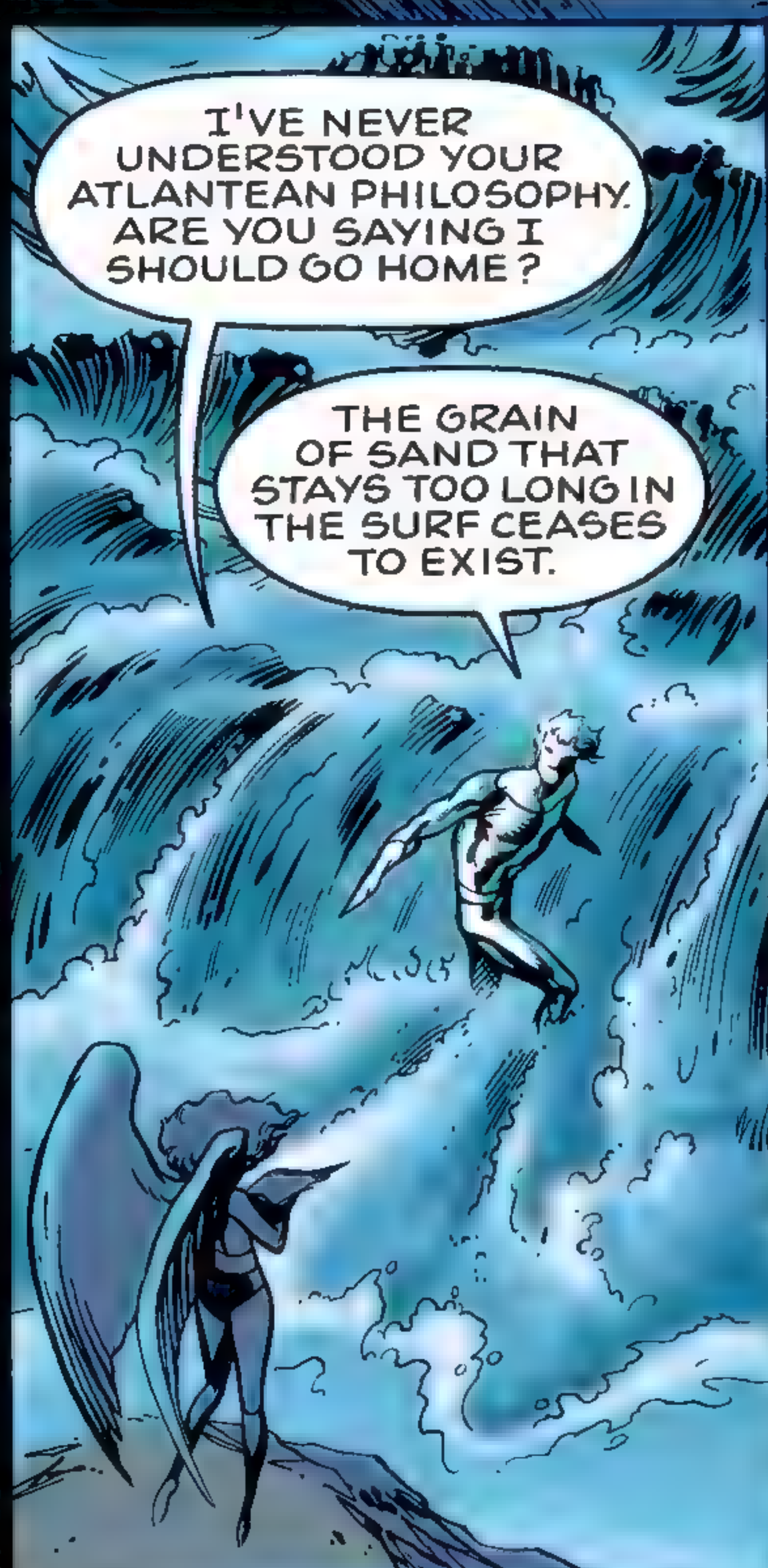


SO
WHY HAVE
YOU STAYED?
THERE HAS BEEN
LITTLE TO HOLD
YOU HERE
SINCE KATAR
DIED.

I THOUGHT
I COULD MAKE A
DIFFERENCE.

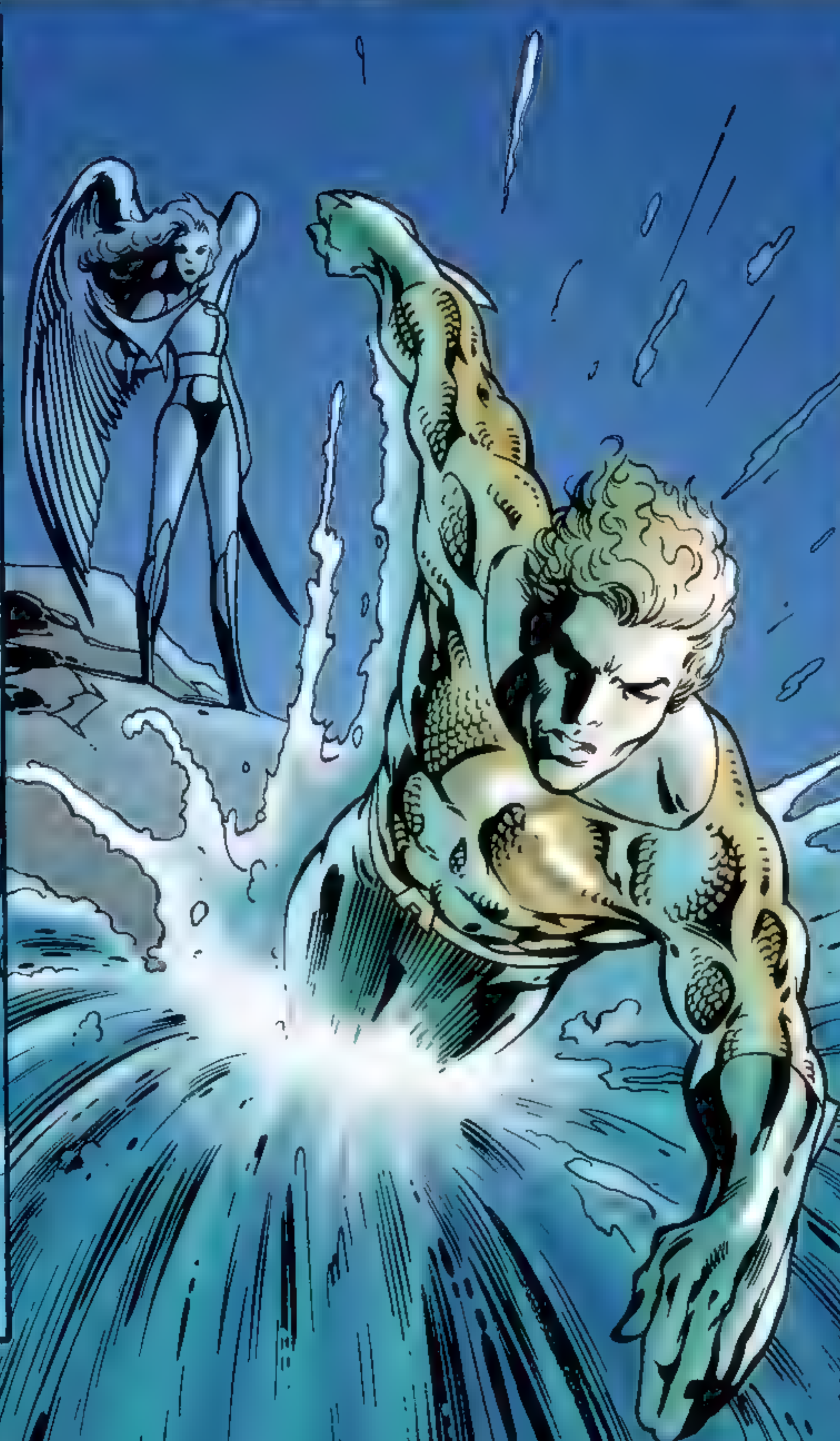
WE ARE
ALL SAND,
TORN AND
TOSSED BY
THE TIDE.

BUT ON A
DRY BEACH WE
LONG TO RETURN
TO THE RHYTHMIC
STILLNESS OF
THE DEPTHS.

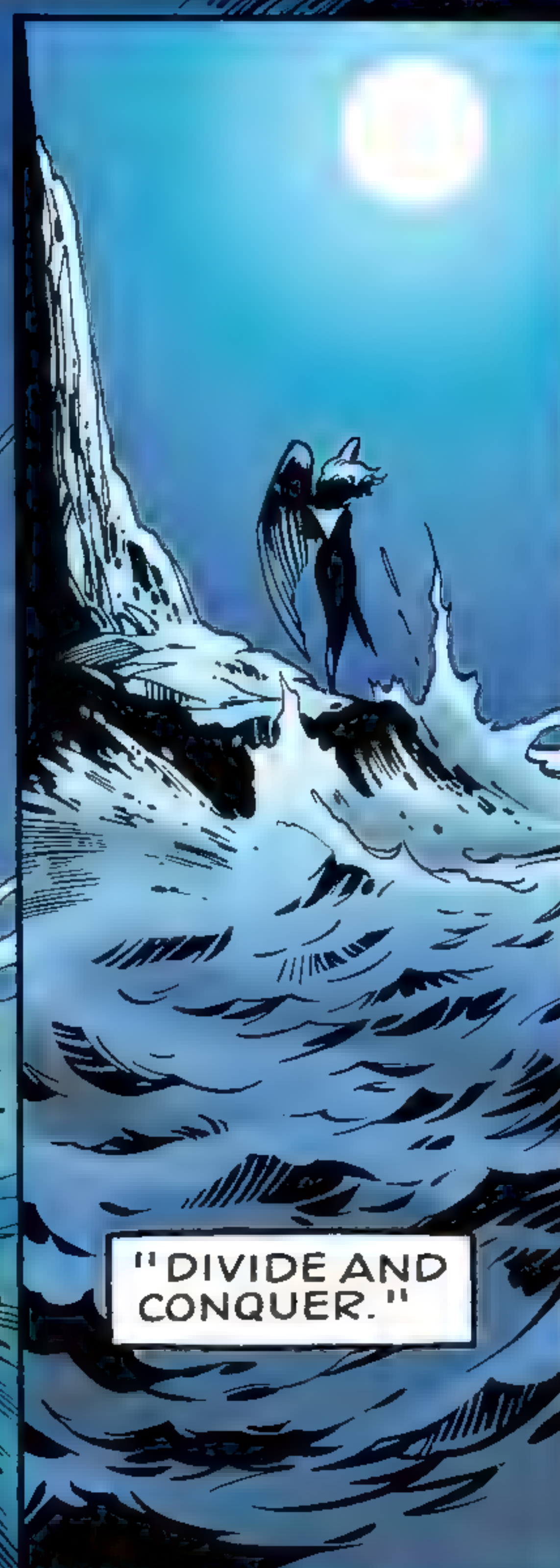


I'VE NEVER
UNDERSTOOD YOUR
ATLANTEAN PHILOSOPHY.
ARE YOU SAYING I
SHOULD GO HOME?

THE GRAIN
OF SAND THAT
STAYS TOO LONG IN
THE SURF CEASES
TO EXIST.



"DIVIDE AND
CONQUER."



DR. NILES CAULDER'S
MANSION, MIDWAY CITY.

ALL META-
HUMANS ARE
ALIENS!

HOW
DOES THIS
CONCERN
US..?

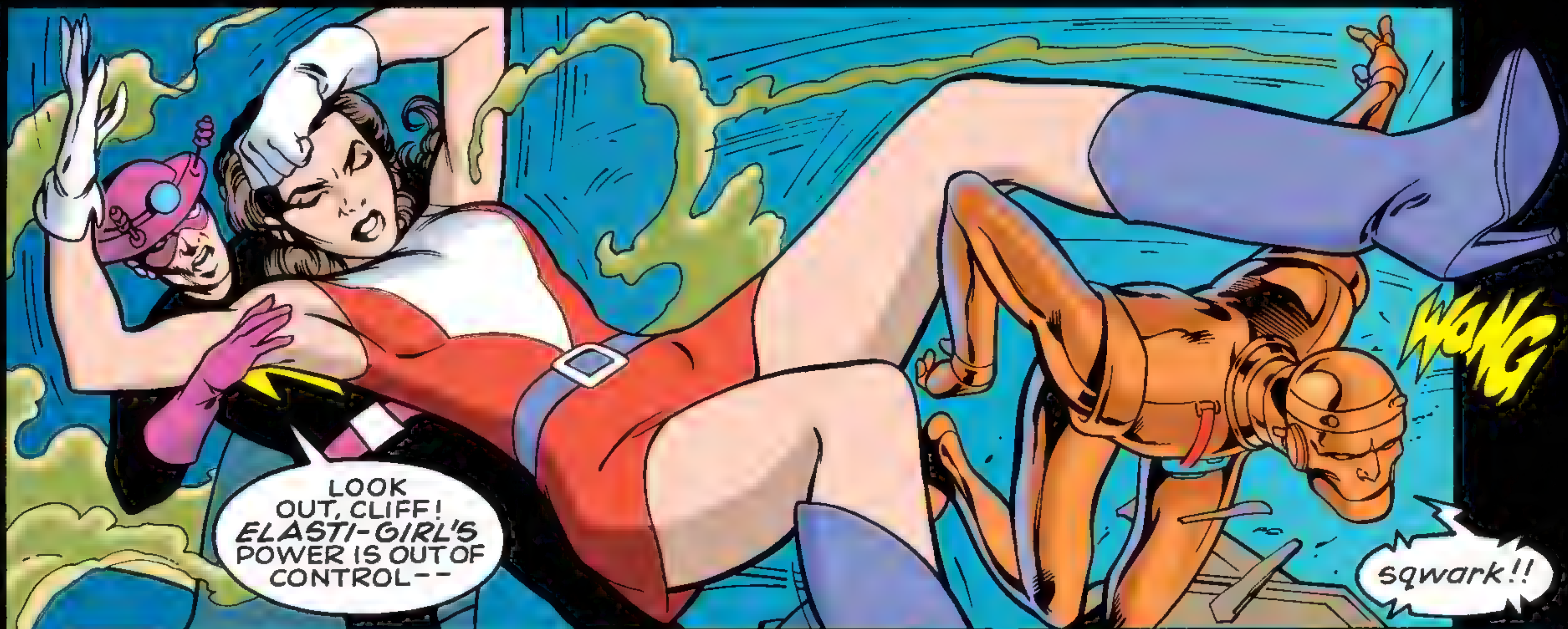
...WE KNOW
THE *DOOM PATROL*
ARE ALL HUMAN,
CHIEF.

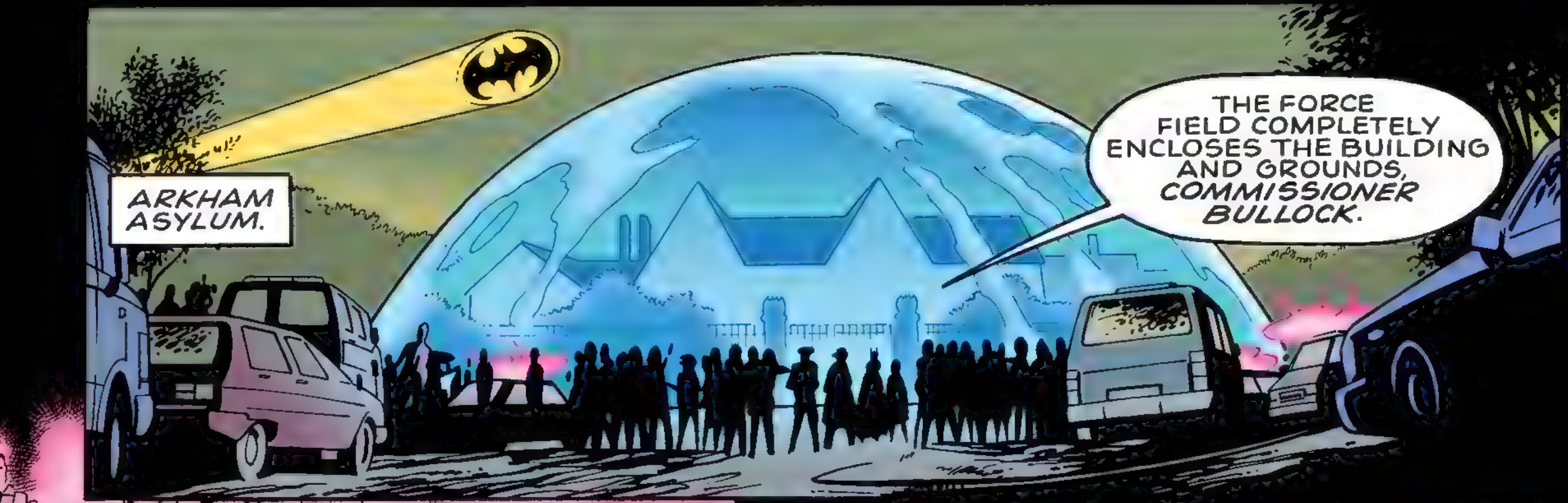
OR AT
LEAST WE
USED TO BE,
MENTO!

ANYWAYS, WE
CAN'T BE CONSIDERED
A MENACE. WE HAVEN'T
SEEN ANY ACTION
IN MONTHS.

PRECISELY
MY POINT,
GARFIELD.







ARKHAM ASYLUM.

THE FORCE FIELD COMPLETELY ENCLOSES THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS, COMMISSIONER BULLOCK.



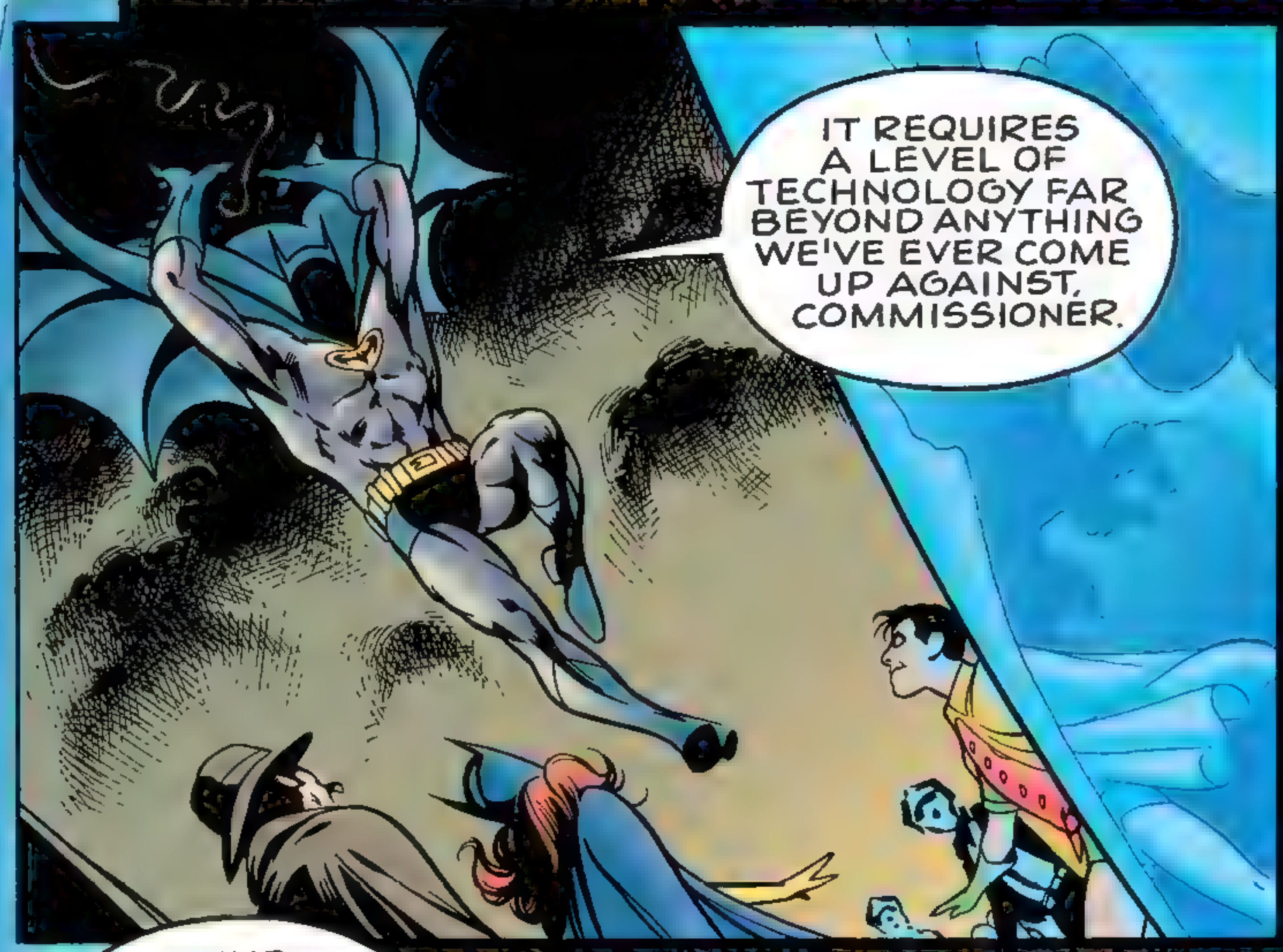
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

NO IDEA.

AND IT'S IMPENETRABLE?

THAT'S WHAT'S WEIRD. IT DOESN'T RESTRICT ME OR ROBIN.

HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE, BATGIRL?



IT REQUIRES A LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY FAR BEYOND ANYTHING WE'VE EVER COME UP AGAINST, COMMISSIONER.



THE FORCE FIELD MUST SOMEHOW BE ABLE TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN BIOLOGICAL SIGNATURES.

BUT THE HOW ISN'T AS IMPORTANT AS THE WHY.



HAL JORDAN'S
APARTMENT,
COAST CITY.

IN
BRIGHTEST DAY,
IN BLACKEST NIGHT,
NO EVIL SHALL ESCAPE
MY SIGHT. LET THOSE
WHO WORSHIP EVIL'S
MIGHT BEWARE MY
POWER-- GREEN
LANTERN'S
LIGHT.

HMMM ?
THAT FELT
DIFFERENT...
FAINT.

EITHER
I'M GETTING
JADED WITH THE
DAILY RITUAL OF
RECHARGING
MY RING...

...OR
SOMETHING'S
WRONG WITH
MY LANTERN
BATTERY.

SINESTRO
IS ATTACKING
US...

...ONE
PARSEC
BEYOND
AALIMA
9...

SPACE
FREIGHTER
K'CHAGEER
CALLING
THE GREEN
LANTERN
OF SECTOR
2814.

UMPH!



SO SORRY ABOUT THE PHONEY DISTRESS CALL...

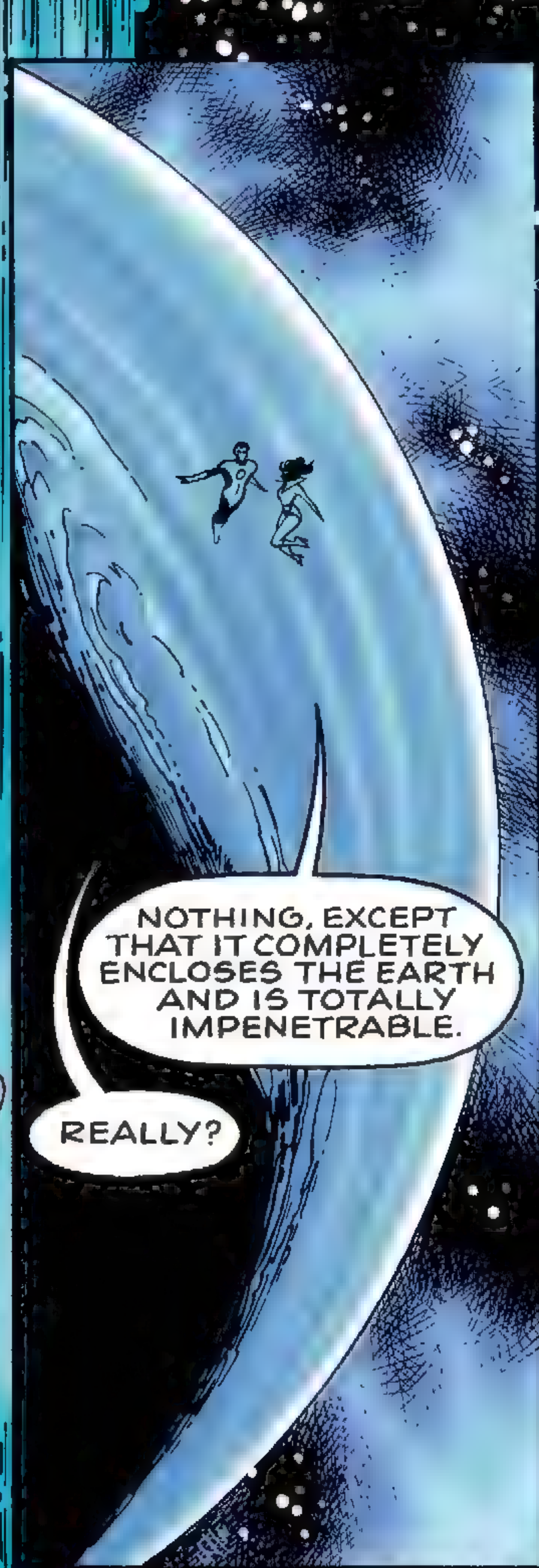
BUT I KNEW IT WAS THE QUICKEST WAY TO GET YOUR ATTENTION. YOU'RE SUCH A BOY SCOUT.



STAR SAPPHIRE!

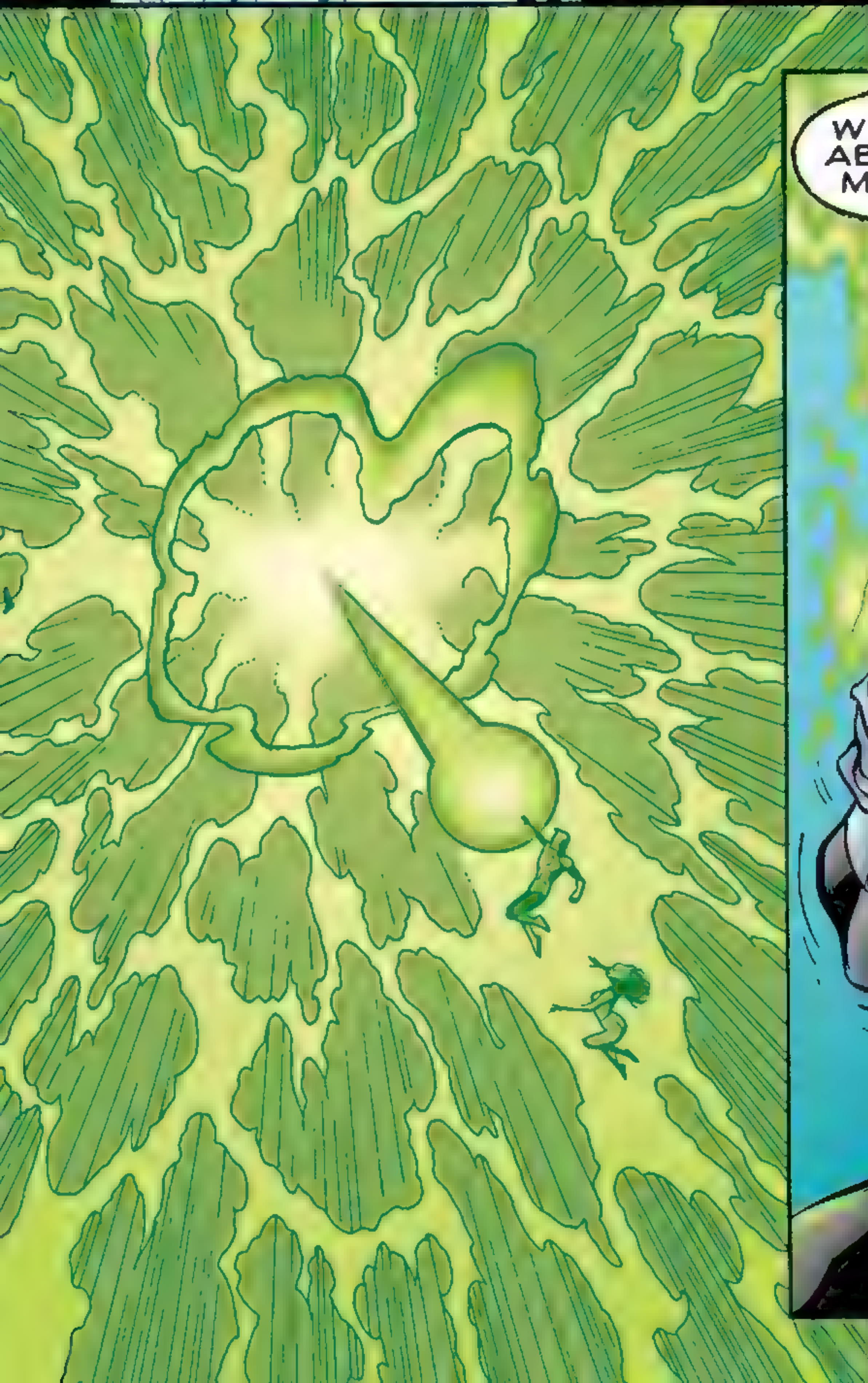
YOU USED TO CALL ME CAROL, HAL.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS FORCE FIELD?



NOTHING, EXCEPT THAT IT COMPLETELY ENCLOSES THE EARTH AND IS TOTALLY IMPENETRABLE.

REALLY?



WHA...IT'S ABSORBING MY BLAST.

SUCKING POWER RIGHT OUT OF MY RING.



YES. IT DID THAT TO ME TOO. IT FEEDS ON ANY FORCE DIRECTED AT IT.

WHY DIDN'T YOU WARN ME?

WOULD YOU HAVE BELIEVED ME?



IF WE WORK TOGETHER WE MAY FIND SOME WAY THROUGH.

NO WAY! I WAS JUST GOING TO VISIT MY SISTERS ON ZAMARON.



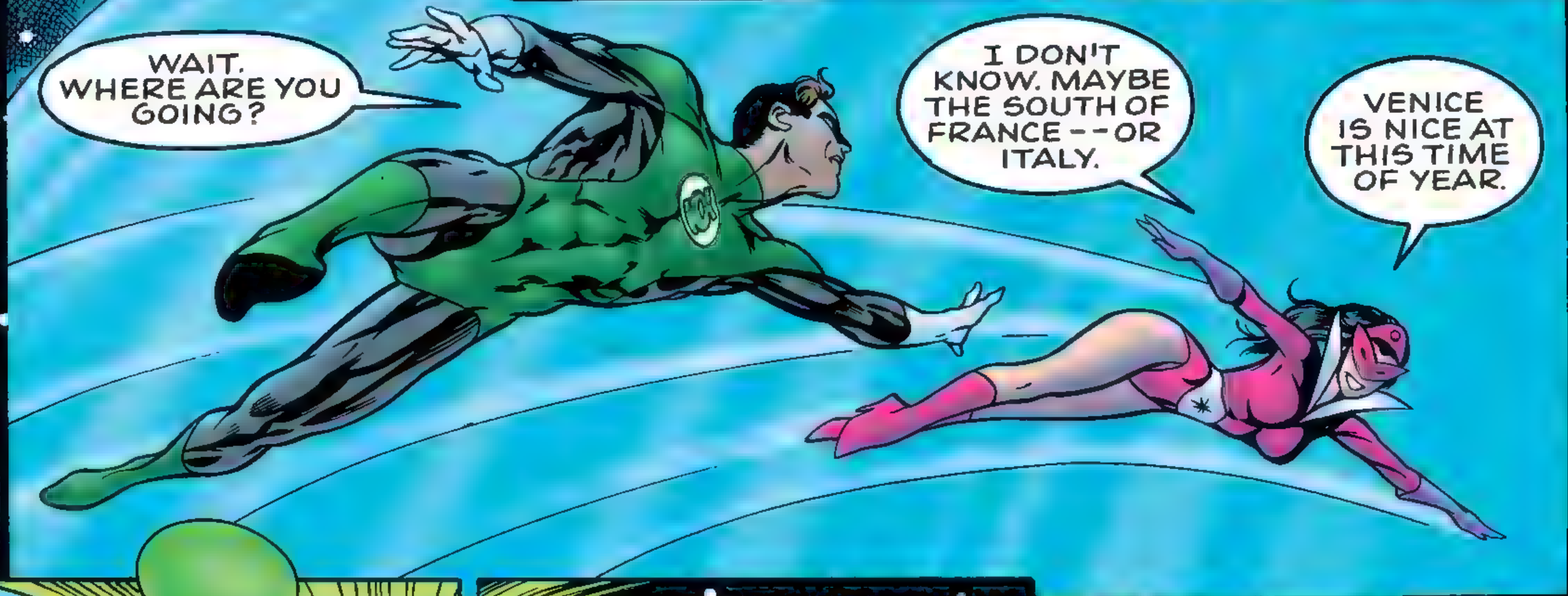
LIAR! EARTH'S GETTING TOO HOT FOR YOUR PETTY CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES, SO YOU DECIDED TO RUN.

THAT'S WHY IT WOULD NEVER WORK BETWEEN US, *HERO*. YOU'RE SOOO GOOD...



...AND I'M A *BAD* GIRL.

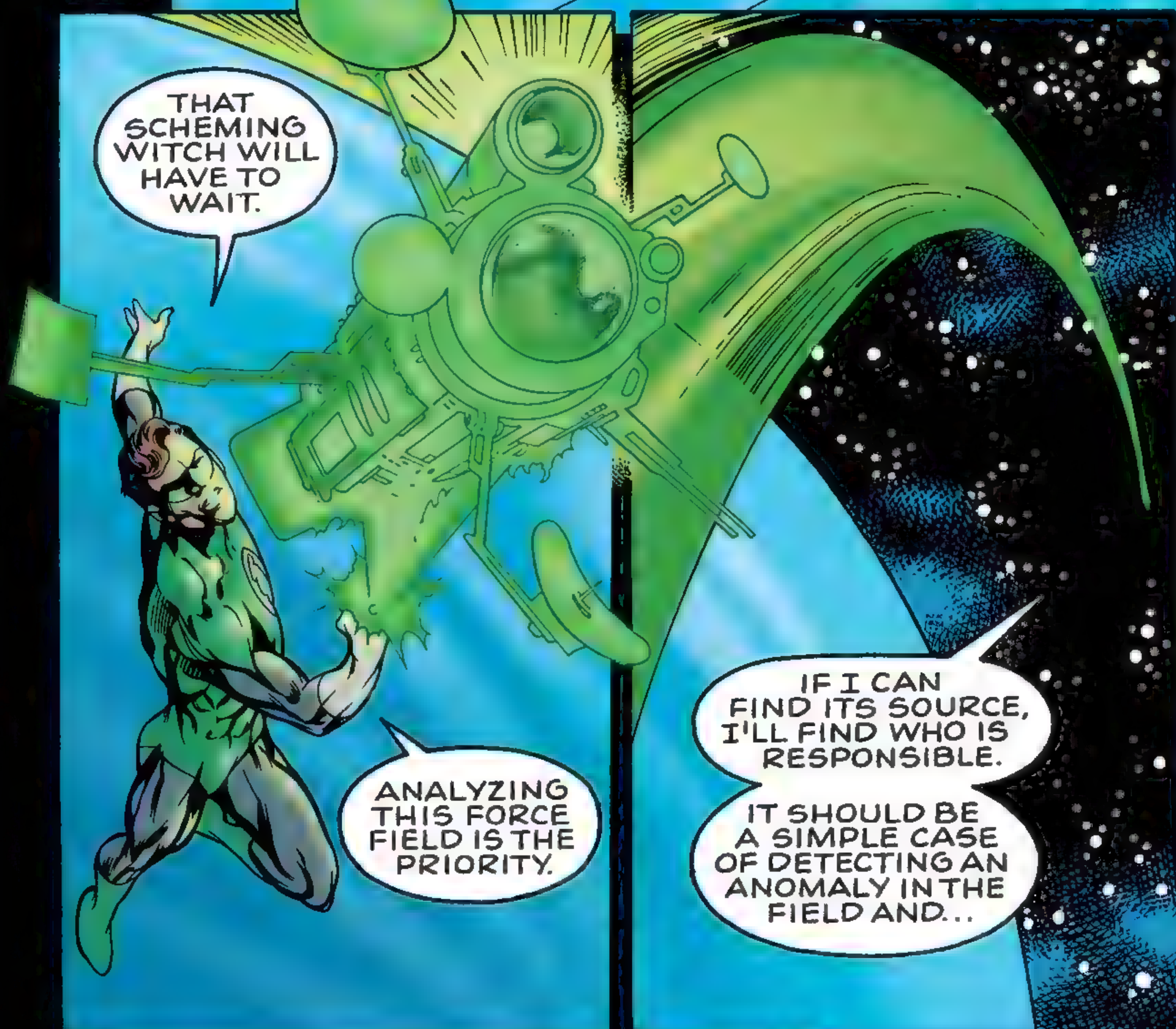
LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU GET IT FIXED.



WAIT. WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE THE SOUTH OF FRANCE -- OR ITALY.

VENICE IS NICE AT THIS TIME OF YEAR.



THAT SCHEMING WITCH WILL HAVE TO WAIT.

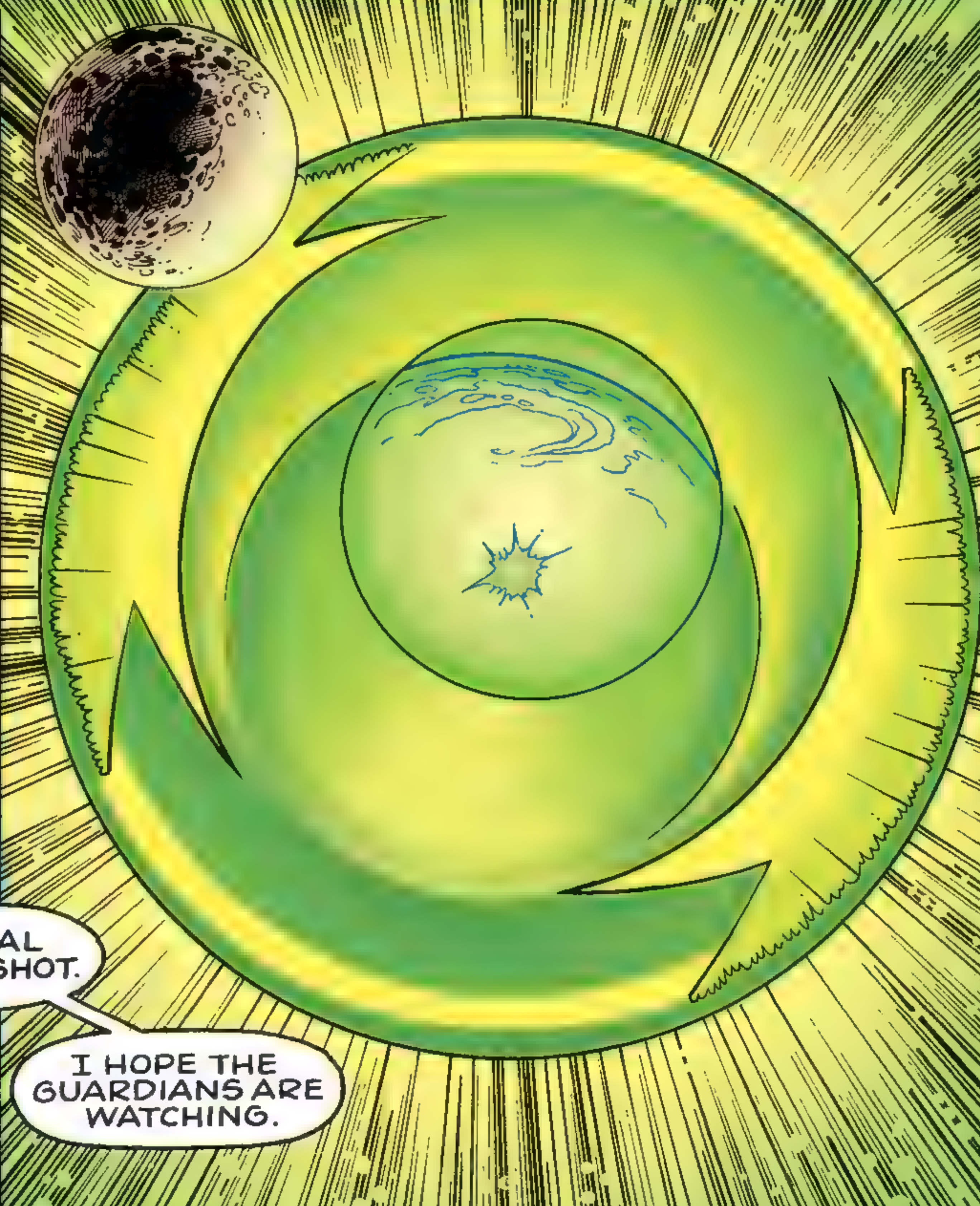
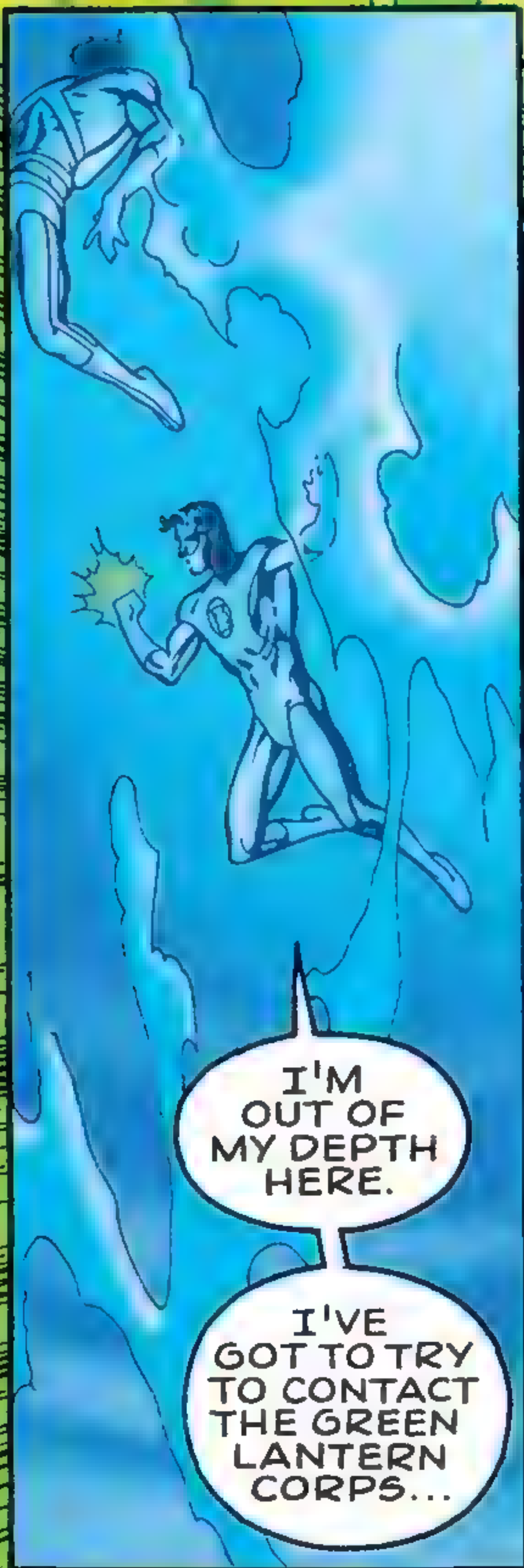
ANALYZING THIS FORCE FIELD IS THE PRIORITY.

IF I CAN FIND ITS SOURCE, I'LL FIND WHO IS RESPONSIBLE.

IT SHOULD BE A SIMPLE CASE OF DETECTING AN ANOMALY IN THE FIELD AND...



...HOMING IN ON-- LORD, NO...!





ARKHAM ASYLUM.

PLEASE, LET'S NOT HAVE ANY MORE UNPLEASANTNESS.

YOU HAVE SEEN HOW INCREDIBLY POWERFUL I HAVE BECOME.

I COULD DESTROY YOU ALL AS EASILY AS I DID KILLER CROC, CLAYFACE AND THE OTHERS...



... BUT I AM A BENEVOLENT RULER AND CHOOSE TO GRANT YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE.

AS LONG AS YOU ENTERTAIN ME IN THE PROCESS.



SO, DON'T PULL YOUR PUNCHES.

NEVER GIVE A SUCKER AN EVEN BREAK.

AND REMEMBER, LAST MAN STANDING...



... LIVES TO BE MY SLAVE.



SQWARRKK!!



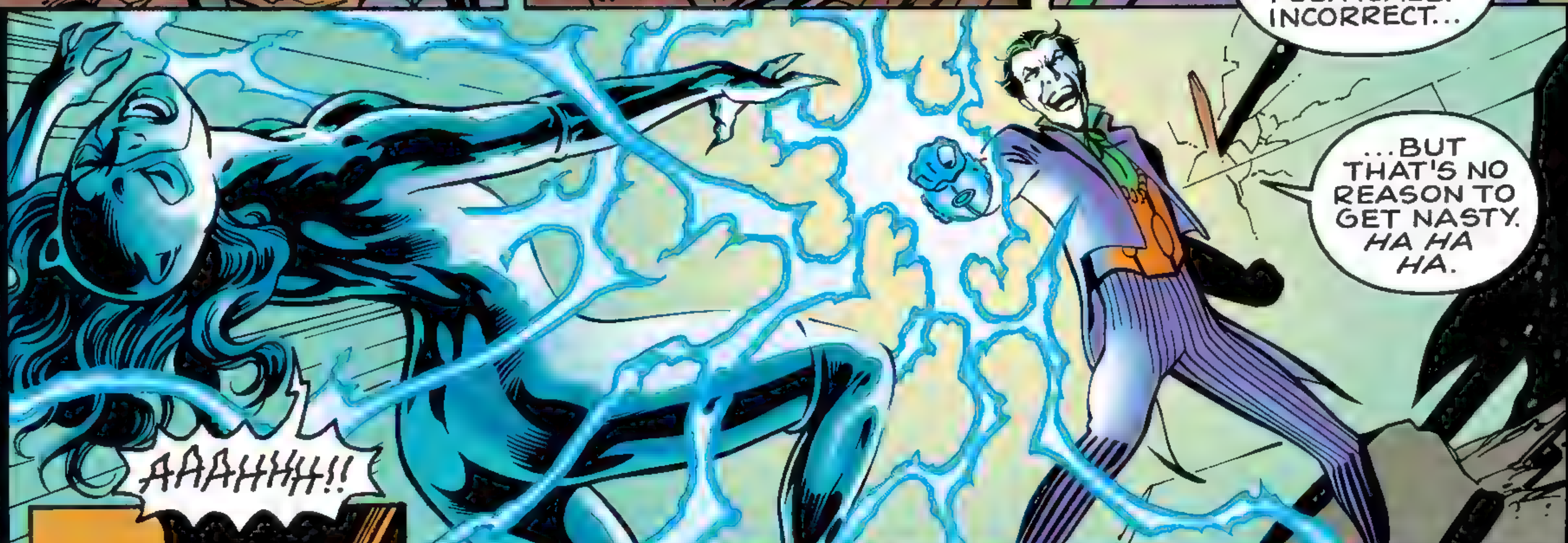
OR IN YOUR CASE, CATWOMAN, LAST *BABE* STANDING.



I'LL BE NO MAN'S SLAVE, CLOWN.

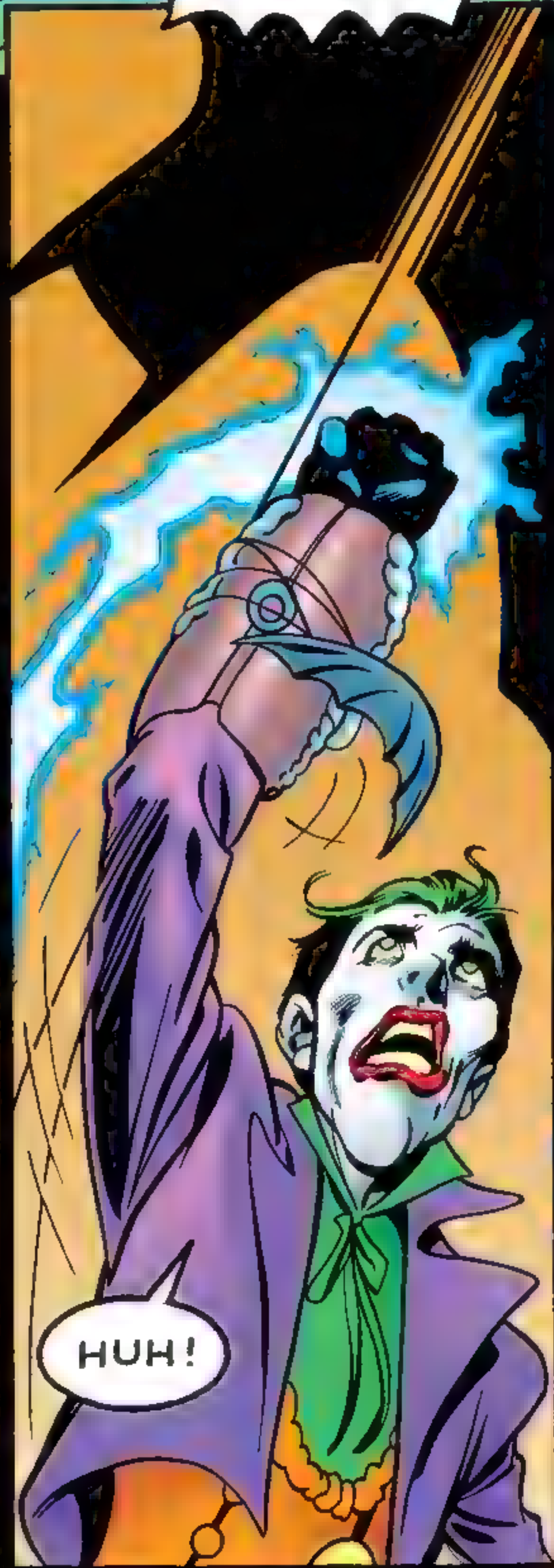


OOKAY. THE '*BABE*' REMARK MAY HAVE BEEN POLITICALLY INCORRECT...



AAAAHHH!!

...BUT THAT'S NO REASON TO GET NASTY. HA HA HA.



HUH!



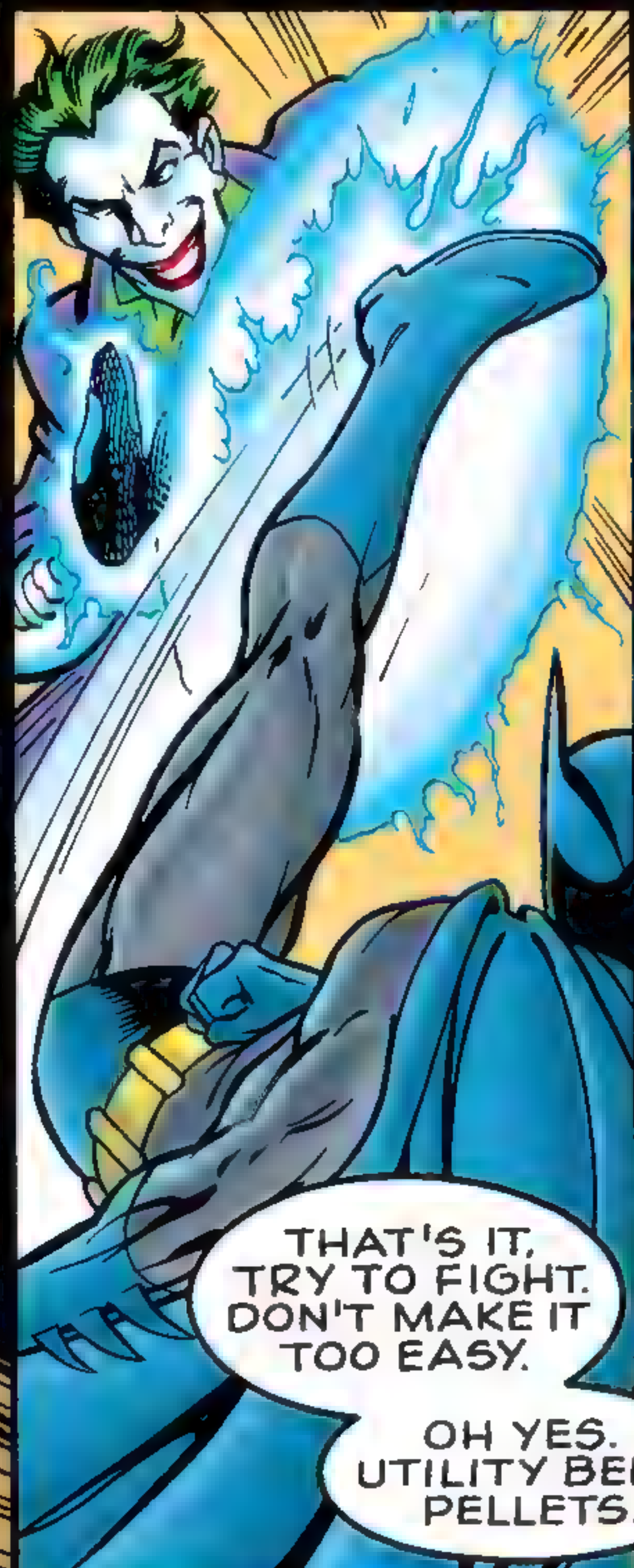
ABOUT TIME.

YOU'RE LATE, BATMAN.



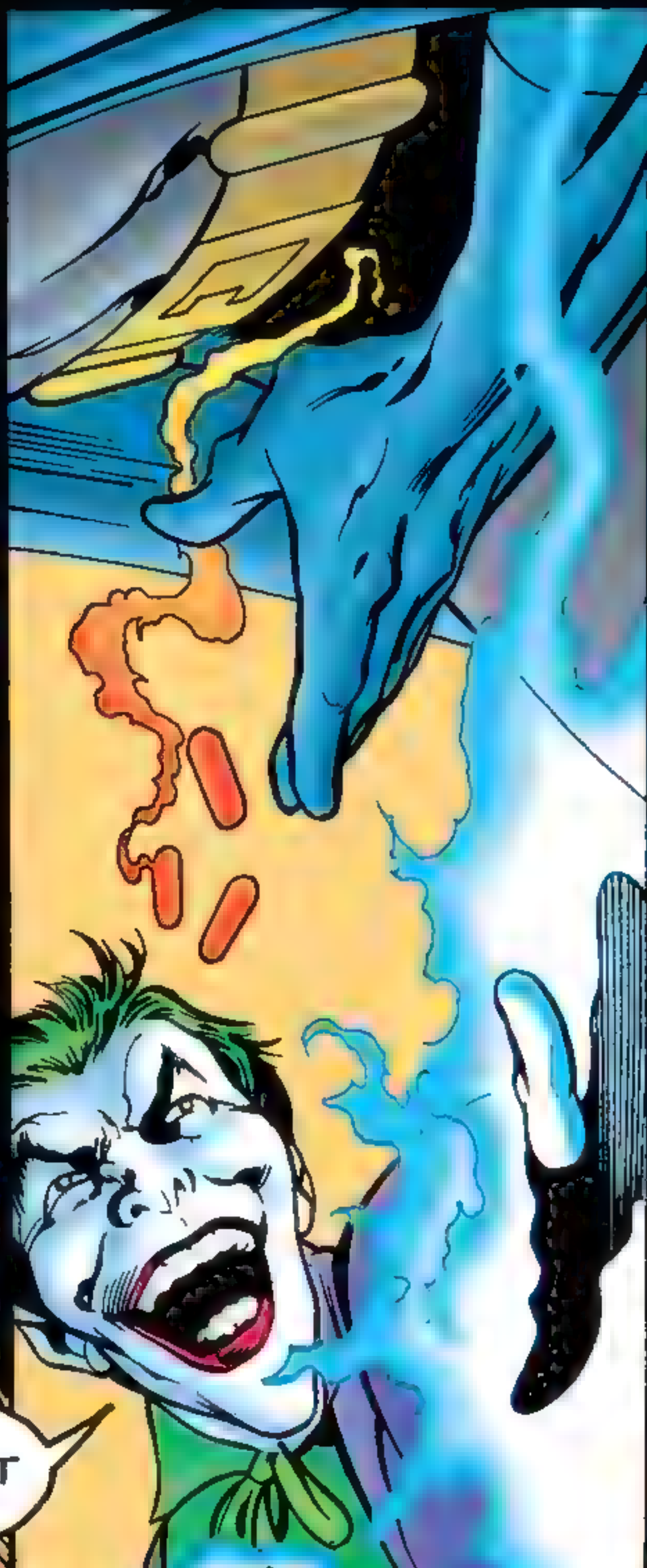
OR SHOULD THAT BE ... HA HA HEH...

... YOU'RE ABOUT TO BECOME THE LATE BATMAN.



THAT'S IT.
TRY TO FIGHT.
DON'T MAKE IT
TOO EASY.

OH YES.
UTILITY BELT
PELLETS.



CONCUSSIVE
FLARES.
WONDERFUL.

SEE
HOW EASILY I
CAN CONTAIN
THEM...



...AND
YOU.

ARE YOU
IMPRESSED?
SURPRISED?

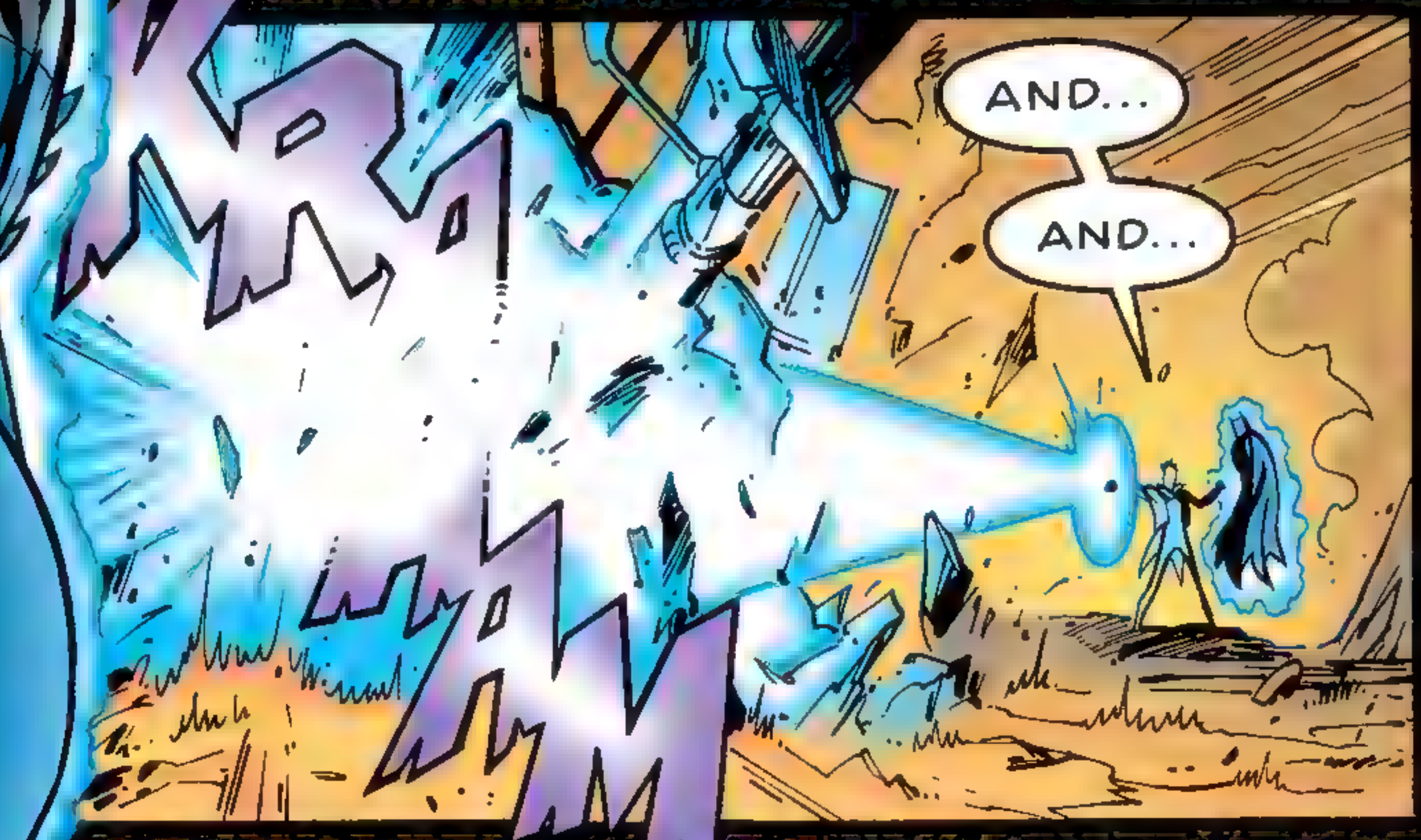


OF COURSE
YOU ARE! HAVEN'T
YOU NOTICED MY NEW
ACCOUTREMENTS? THEY
WERE A GIFT.

I'VE MADE
SOME NEW
FRIENDS SINCE
LAST WE MET.
POWERFUL
FRIENDS...



...AND
THEY MADE **ME**
POWERFUL!



AND...

AND...



THIS IS
NO FUN!



YOU WERE MEANT TO BRING *BRATGIRL* AND THE *BOY BLUNDER*.



YOU NEED SOME NEW MATERIAL, *YOLKER*!

YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO WORK ON A NEW ROUTINE--



-- WHEN YOU'RE BACK IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT.

NO! BATGIRL. ROBIN. GET OUT OF HERE. NOW!



TOO LATE, BATS. HA HA. I HAVE THEM.

LET THEM GO, JOKER. THIS IS BETWEEN US. THIS IS OUR FIGHT.

THE 'FIGHT' IS OVER, OLD CHUM...



... AND I'VE WON.

I COULD EASILY CRUSH YOU...





...BUT FIRST
I WANT YOU
TO SUFFER.

I WANT YOU
TO EXPERIENCE
THE PAIN AND MENTAL
ANGUISH YOU INFLICTED
ON ME AND MY LOYAL
FOLLOWERS IN
THE PAST.

DON'T
DO THIS,
JOKER.
IT'S...

INSANE?



INSANITY IS
JUST A STATE OF
MIND, BATS.

DO WHATEVER
YOU WANT TO ME,
JOKER. BUT PLEASE
LET THEM GO.



AIEEE! GAAAAH!



NOPE. I
WANT MY
POUND OF
FLESH.

NOOOOOO!



WHOOPS!
THAT LOOKS
MORE LIKE A
POUND AND
A HALF.

WELL
IF AT FIRST
YOU DON'T
SUCCEED...

BATMAN,
HELP...
AIEEE!

JOKER.
PLEASE STOP!
PLEASE!



GAHH!

...TRY,
TRY AGAIN. HA
HA HA.

STOP!
JOKER, PLEASE...
I BEG YOU...



YAAAAAEEEE

PLEASE...

A DISTANT STAR
CIRCLED BY TWO
WORLDS. NEW
GENESIS AND ITS
DARK TWIN...

...APOKOLIPS.

17% OF OUR
WORLD'S MASS HAS
BEEN VAPORIZED IN
THE X-ELEMENT
DETONATION.

HOW IS
THAT POSSIBLE,
DESAAD?
OUR PLANETARY
DEFENSES WERE
NOT BREACHED.

A TEAM OF
PARADEMONS
WAS TRAVELLING
FROM APOKOLIPS
TO EARTH VIA A
BOOM TUBE.

THE TUBE
MATRIX FOCUSED
THE BLAST BACK TO
THE EMBARKATION
POINT...

...WHERE
IT IGNITED THE
MUNITION FACTORIES'
PRIMARY X-ELEMENT
STOCKPILE.

BUT WHAT
CAUSED THE
BOOM TUBE TO
COLLAPSE?

AN ENERGY
SHIELD AROUND THE
EARTH PREVENTED
THE BOOM TUBE EXIT
FROM FORMING.

SUCH A
CONSTRUCTION
IS FAR BEYOND
TERRAN TECH-
NOLOGY.

THIS IS
CLEARLY A SNEAK
ATTACK BY NEW
GENESIS.

AND WE
HAVE THE
EVIDENCE TO
PROVE IT.



TWO OF
IZAYA'S
SPIES.

MR.
MIRACLE
AND BIG
BARDA.

WE'RE
NOT
SPIES.

WE CAME
TO APOKOLIPS TO
RESCUE FRIENDS FROM
GRANNY GOODNESS'
ORPHANAGE.

ARE WE
TO BELIEVE
YOUR TRESPASS
AT THE PRECISE
MOMENT OF THIS
ATTACK IS MERE
COINCIDENCE?



WE
DIDN'T HAVE
ANYTHING TO
DO WITH THE
EXPLOSION OR
THE FORCE
FIELD AROUND
EARTH.

NOR
DID ANY OF
THE NEW
GODS.

EARTH
WAS DECLARED
NEUTRAL TERRITORY
IN THE PEACE TREATY
BETWEEN APOKOLIPS
AND NEW
GENESIS.

YOUR PARA-
DEMONS SHOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN GOING
THERE.

WHY NOT?
BECAUSE OF
THE TREATY?

OR
HAS IZAYA
SOMETHING
TO HIDE?



ANSWER
ME, WHELP.
OR SUFFER THE
WRATH OF
DARKSEID.

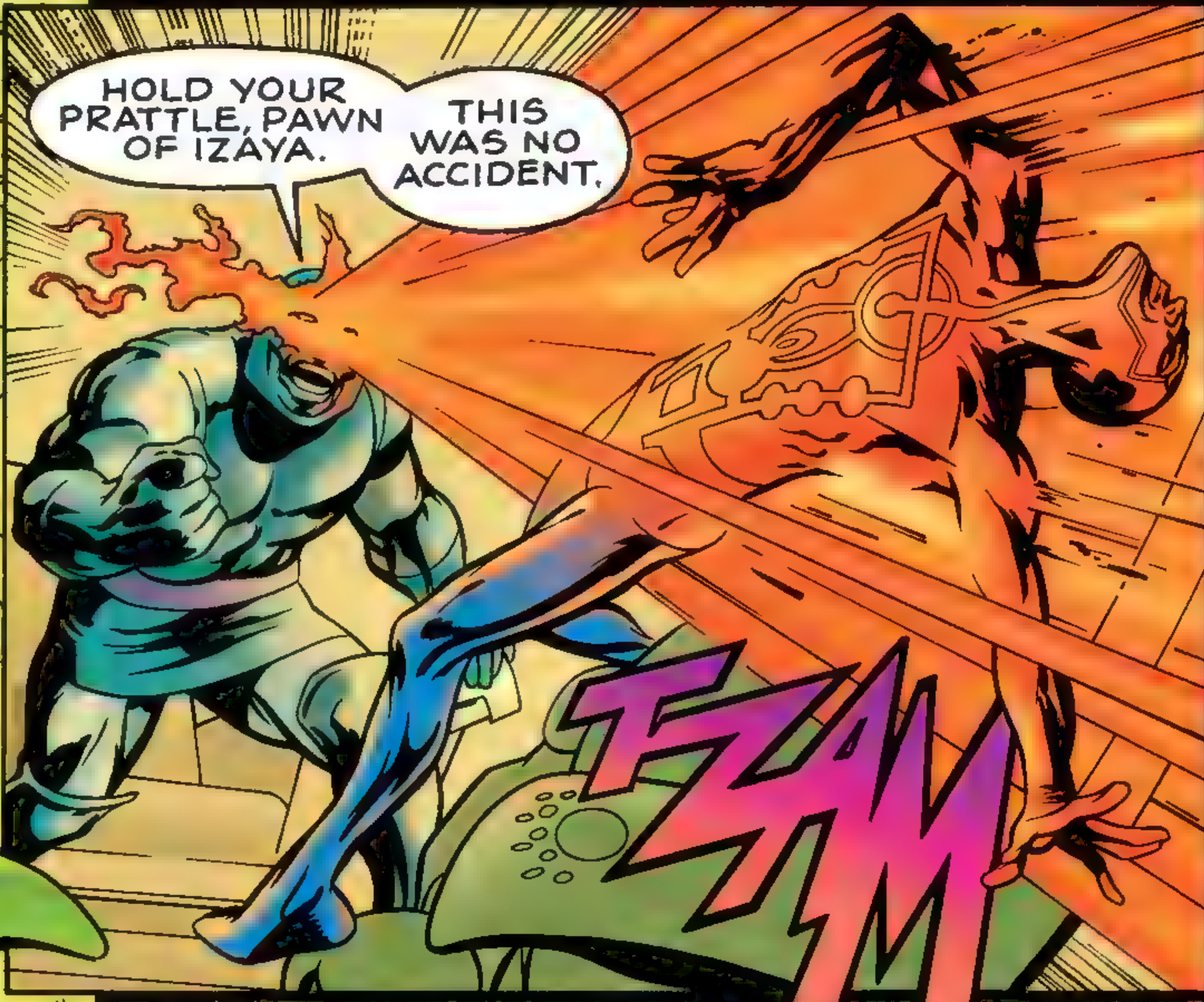
STAY YOUR
HAND, LORD OF
APOKOLIPS.



METRON!

I KNEW YOUR MILITARISTIC PARANOIA WOULD CAUSE YOU TO MISUNDERSTAND THE BOOM TUBE ACCIDENT.

AS AN EMISSARY OF THE HIGHFATHER, LET ME OFFER AID IN THIS TIME OF CRISIS.



HOLD YOUR PRATTLE, PAWN OF IZAYA.

THIS WAS NO ACCIDENT.

FZAM



IT WAS A DEVIOUS SCHEME TO CIRCUMVENT OUR DEFENSES...

TO INFLICT MAXIMUM CARNAGE WITH A COWARDLY BLOW...

... AND LEAVE US VULNERABLE TO INVASION.

WE HAVE BUT ONE RECOURSE TO STRIKE FIRST.



LET THERE BE WAR!



ARKHAM ASYLUM.



AND, IF FRANCIS BACON ART ISN'T TO YOUR TASTE, JUST REGARD IT AS AN ANATOMY LESSON.

OKAY, SO YOUR SIDE-KICKS ARE DEAD, BATS. BUT LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE...

... AT LEAST THEY'VE STOPPED THAT AWFUL SCREAMING. HA HA HA.



GAH!

YOU SICK MANIAC! THEY WERE CHILDREN.



THAT HURT, KITTY...

AND YOU BROKE MY CONCENTRATION...



...AND I'VE RELEASED...



...BATMAN.

NO!

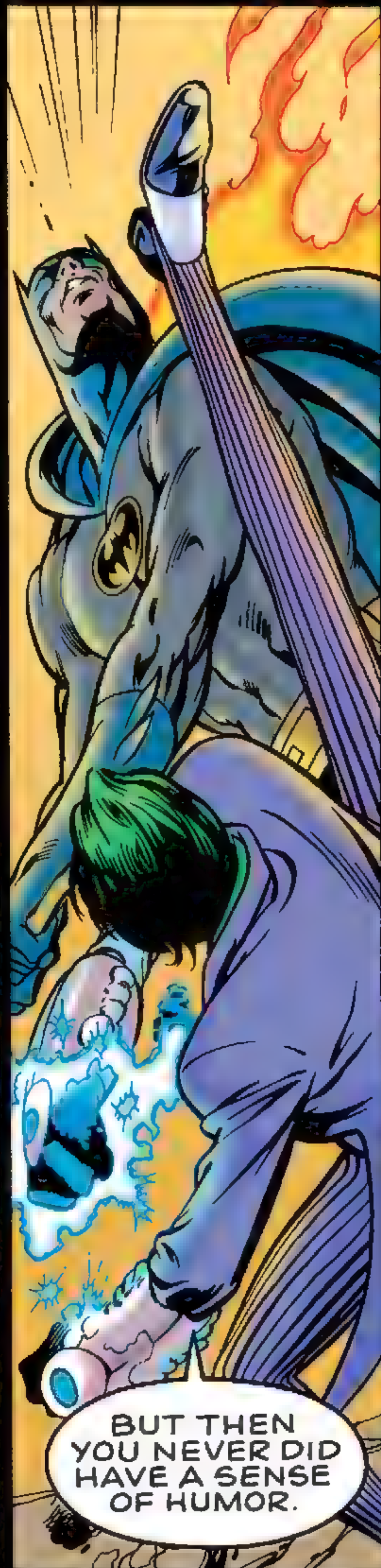


YOU BROKE
MY POWER SLEEVE,
YOU POINTY-EARED
SPOILSPORT.



WHA...
YOU DID IT
AGAIN.

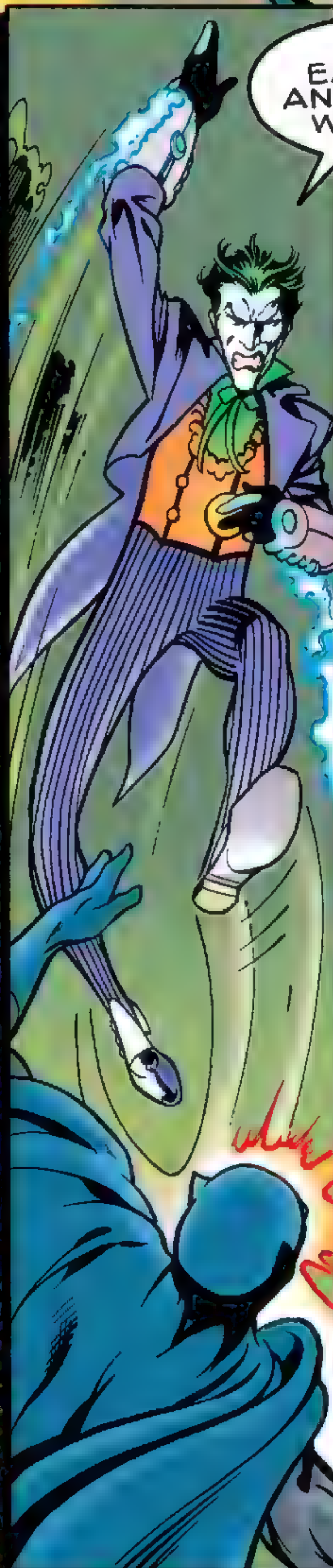
WHAT
A PARTY
POOPER.



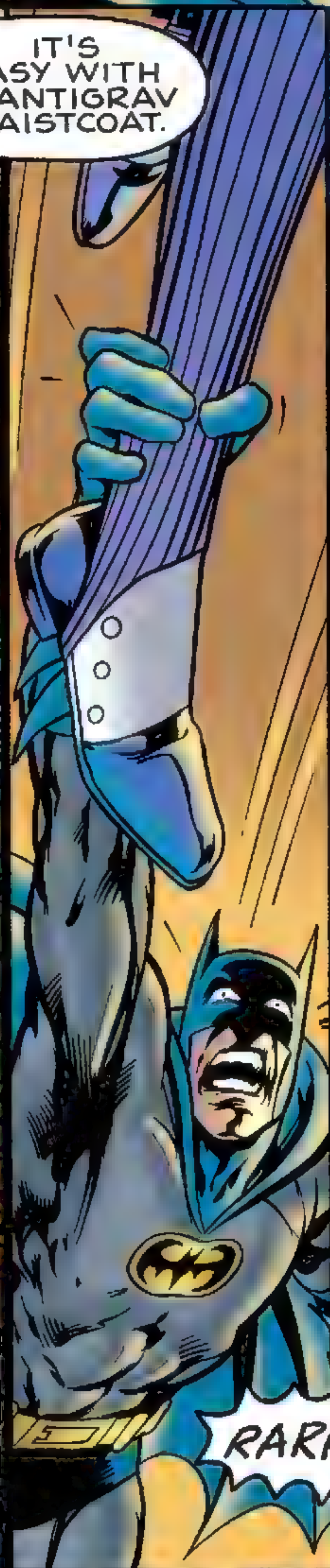
BUT THEN
YOU NEVER DID
HAVE A SENSE
OF HUMOR.



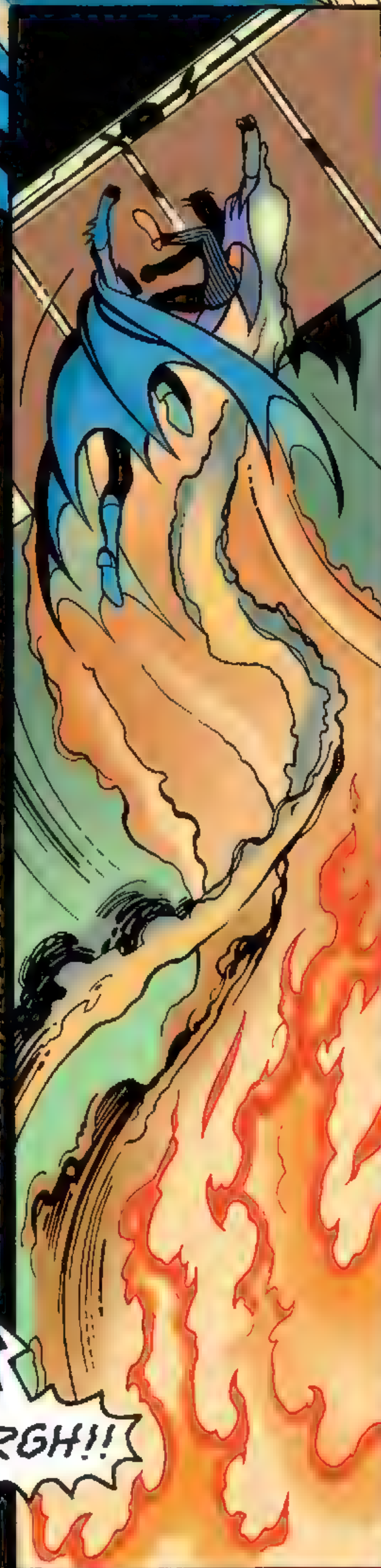
UNNET!
-- YOU OUGHT
TO LIGHTEN
UP.



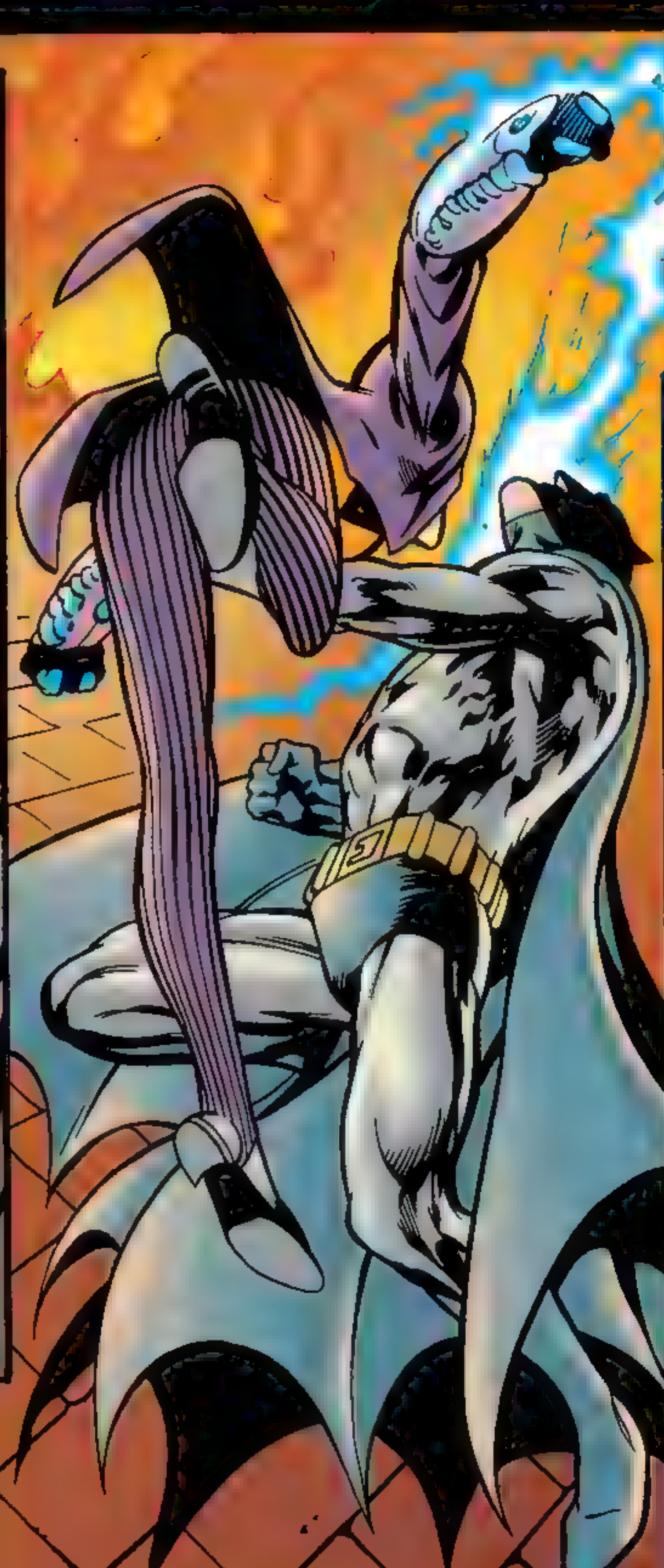
IT'S
EASY WITH
AN ANTIGRAV
WAISTCOAT.



RARRGH!!



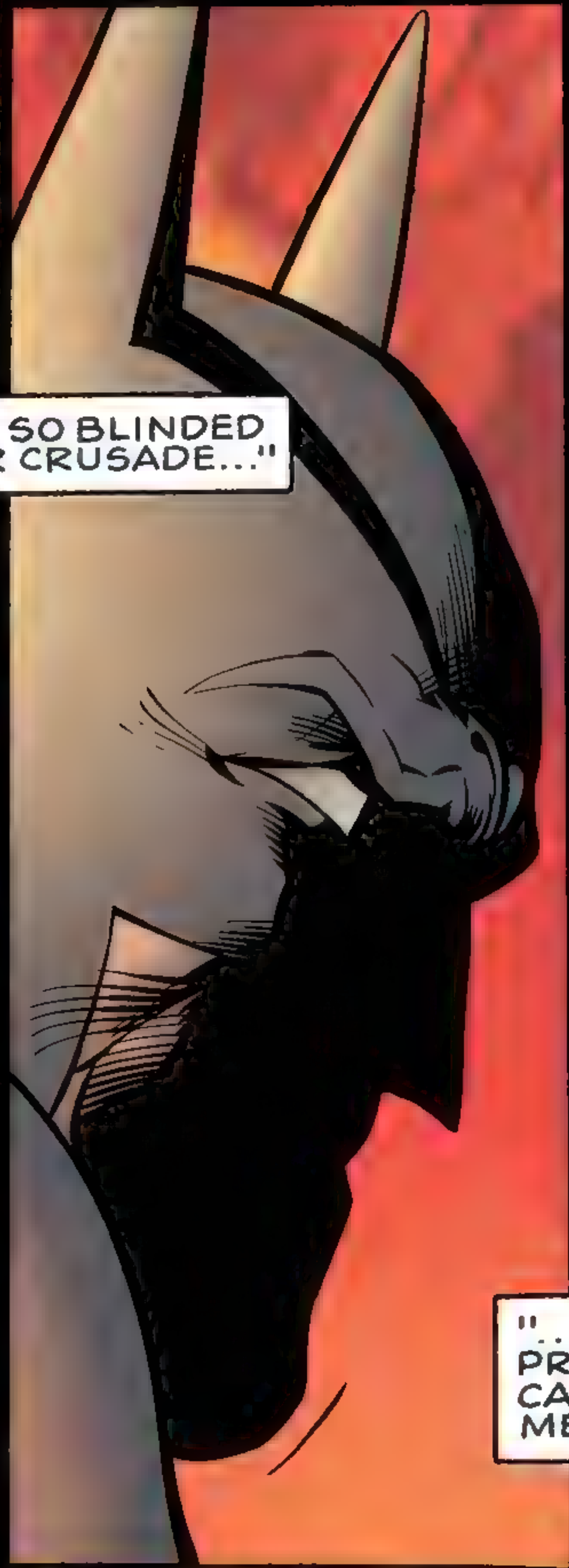






"YOU'RE YOUR OWN WORST ENEMY, BATMAN."

"YOU'RE SO BLINDED BY YOUR CRUSADE..."



"... THAT YOU'LL PROVIDE JUST CAUSE FOR THE MEDIA..."



"... TO PORTRAY ALL METAHUMANS AS MONSTERS."



METROPOLIS.

HAVE YOUR
I.D. LICENSE AND
VEHICLE REGISTRATION
READY AND PROCEED
THROUGH THE
SECURITY SCAN
ARCH.

PURPOSE
OF VISIT, MISS
LANE?

LENGTH
OF STAY?

BUSINESS. I'M
A JOURNALIST.

A DAY
OR TWO.

METROPOLIS
CHECKPOINT
17c
Non-Residents
and U.S. Passport controls

WAIT HERE
WHILE I CONFIRM
YOUR STATUS.

IS ALL OF
THIS REALLY
NECESSARY?

I'D SAY
LAST NIGHT'S
INCIDENT IN
GOTHAM
PROVES IT
IS.

GOTHAM?
WHAT
HAPPENED?

I'VE BEEN
DRIVING ALL
NIGHT...AND THIS
CAR'S RADIO
DOESN'T
WORK--

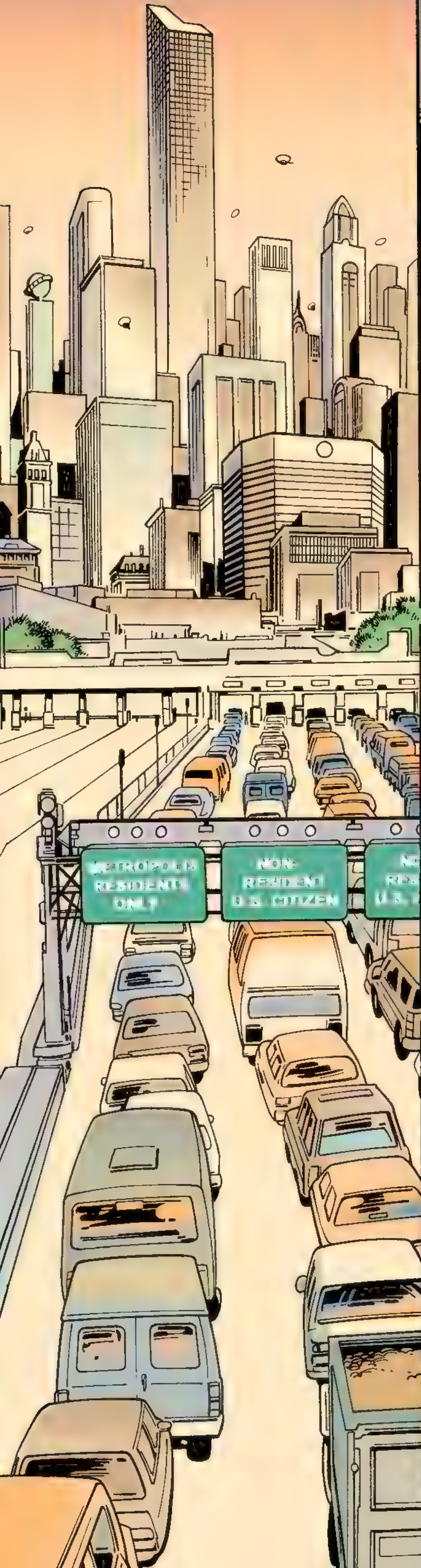
IT'S A
RENTAL.

Y' MUST BE
THE ONLY PERSON
IN THE WORLD
WHO DOESN'T
KNOW...

...IT'S BEEN ON
EVERY NETWORK
ALL MORNIN'!

OH LORD...!

IT WAS
MURDER...



...THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT. BATMAN SLAUGHTERED THE STAFF AND INMATES AT ARKHAM ASYLUM.

HIS FINAL, SAVAGE EXECUTION PERFORMED BEFORE THE GATHERED MEDIA.

PREVIOUSLY, THE BATMAN CONDUCTED HIS EXPLOITS IN THE SHADOWS.

WHAT WAS THE CAUSE OF THIS PUBLIC EXHIBITION AT ARKHAM?

PERRY WHITE



ARROGANT DISDAIN OF THE LAW? OR A WARNING OF WHAT IS TO COME?

WE MAY NEVER KNOW BECAUSE SHORTLY AFTER BATMAN DISAPPEARED INTO THE BLAZING ASYLUM...

COMMISSIONER BULLOCK, A SUPPORTER OF BATMAN, REFUSED TO CONDEMN HIM.

Bleep Bleep YOU Bleep VULTURES. I'M ONLY INTERESTED IN Bleeep FACTS.

... A MASSIVE EXPLOSION TORE THE BUILDING APART!

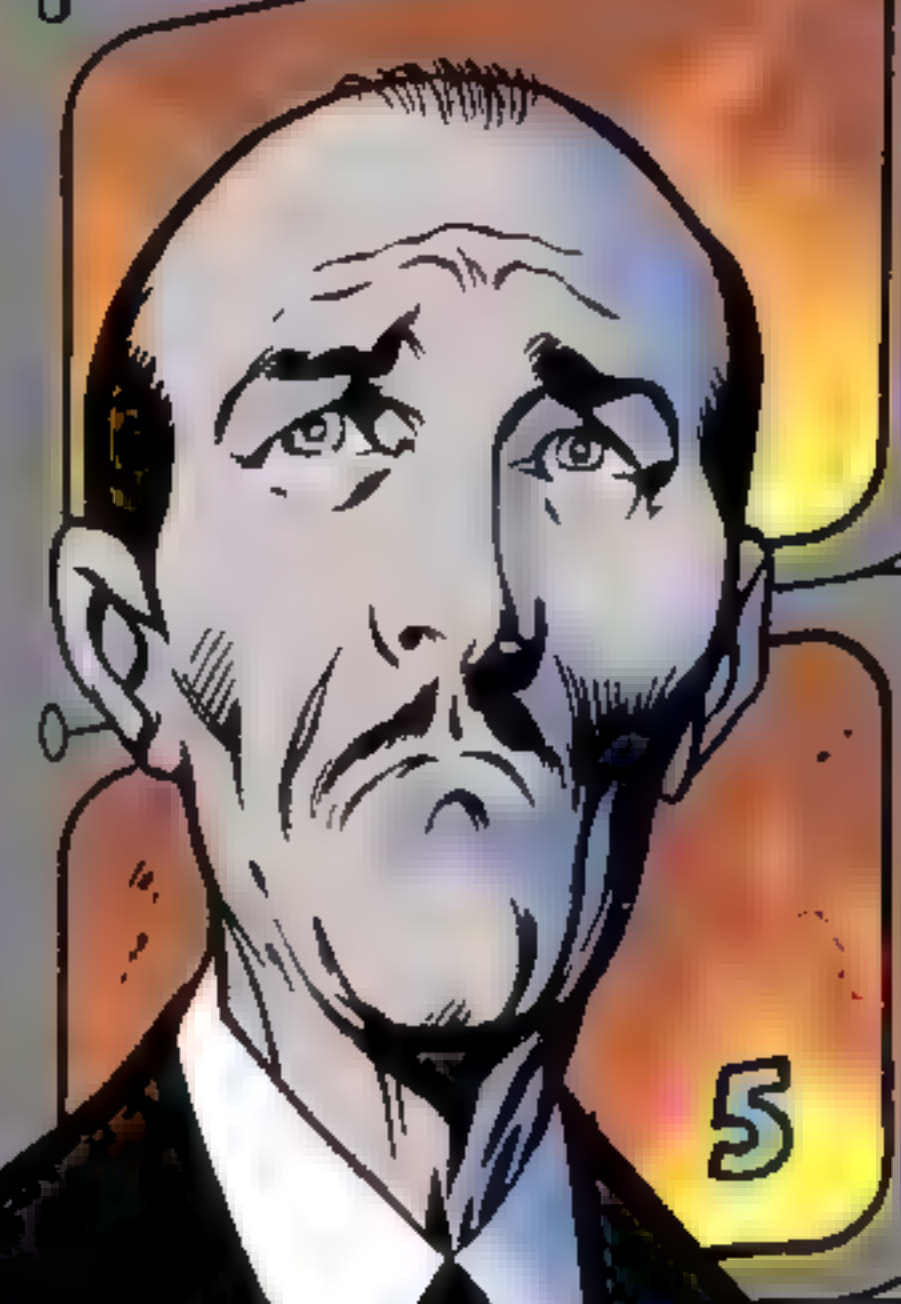
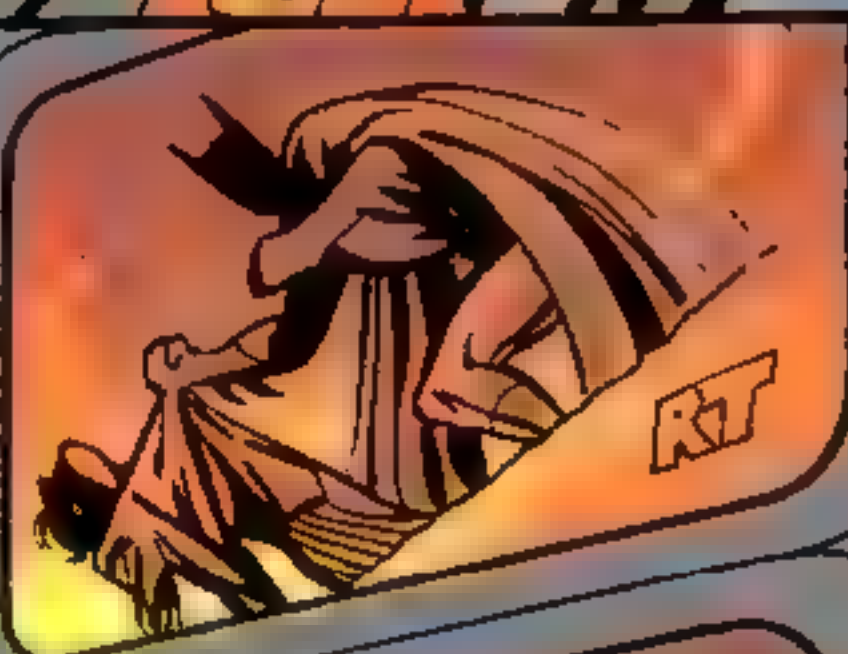
AN ACCIDENTAL IGNITION OF A GAS MAIN? OR AN ATTEMPT TO DESTROY EVIDENCE OF THE MASSACRE?

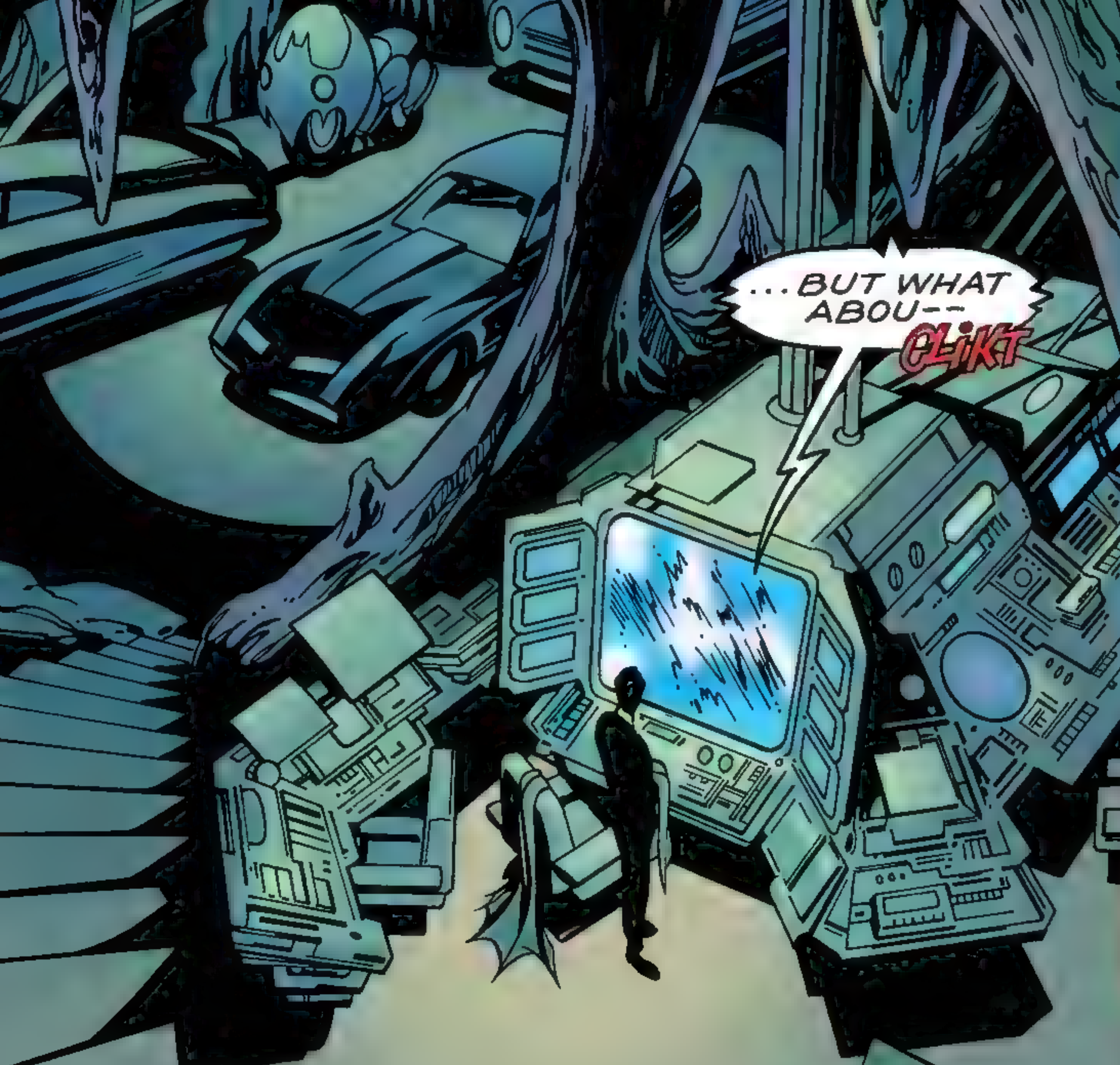
POLICE SOURCES HAVE CONFIRMED NO ONE COULD ESCAPE THROUGH THE CORDON AROUND ARKHAM.

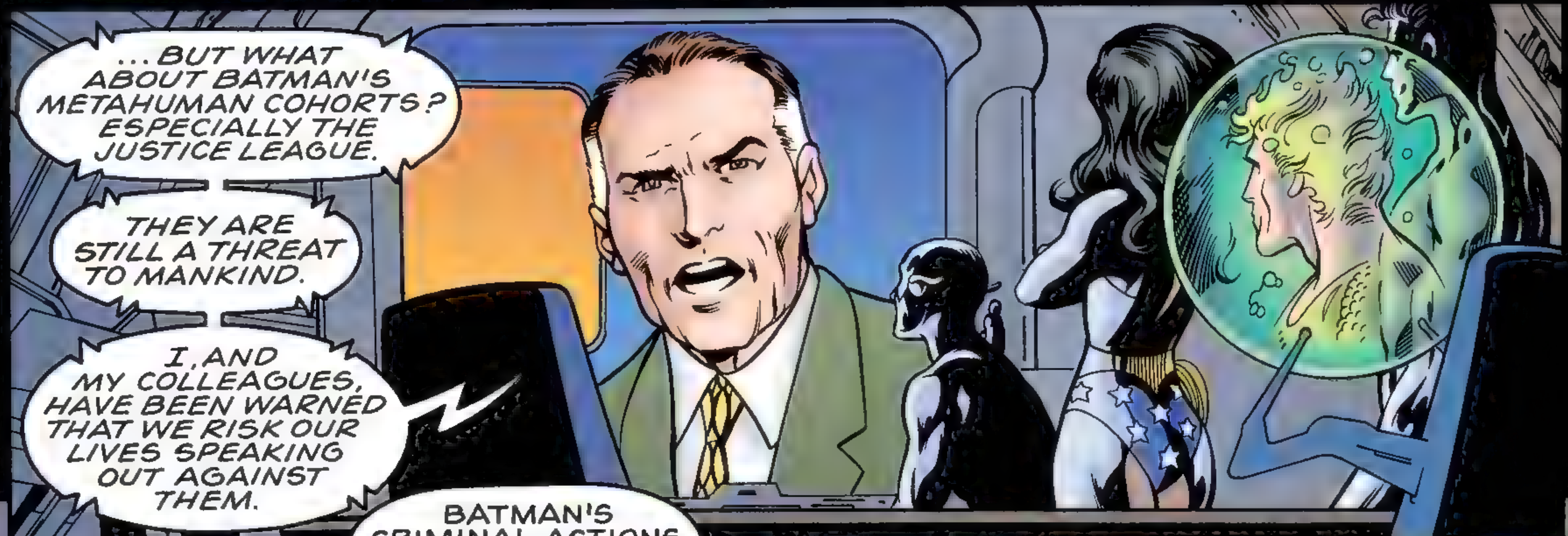
SO, ALTHOUGH IT MAY NEVER BE POSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY INDIVIDUAL REMAINS...

...IT IS CERTAIN THAT NO ONE SURVIVED INSIDE THE ASYLUM.

THE BATMAN IS DEAD...







...BUT WHAT ABOUT BATMAN'S METAHUMAN COHORTS? ESPECIALLY THE JUSTICE LEAGUE.

THEY ARE STILL A THREAT TO MANKIND.

I, AND MY COLLEAGUES, HAVE BEEN WARNED THAT WE RISK OUR LIVES SPEAKING OUT AGAINST THEM.

BATMAN'S CRIMINAL ACTIONS HAVE DISCREDITED US ALL.

I DON'T BELIEVE IT. THEY CAN SAY ANYTHING NOW HE'S DEAD... NOT ABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF. WE'VE GOT TO GO TO GOTHAM--

THAT WOULD ONLY INFLAME THE SITUATION. WE'RE ALL PUBLIC ENEMIES NOW.

IT WAS A MISTAKE NOT TO HAVE TAKEN THE HATE CAMPAIGN MORE SERIOUSLY, BUT...

...OUR MOST IMMEDIATE CONCERN IS THE FORCE FIELD AROUND EARTH.



LOGIC SUGGESTS IT MUST BE RELATED TO THIS ANTI-METAHUMAN MOVEMENT--

-- A WAY TO ISOLATE US FROM THE REST OF THE UNIVERSE--

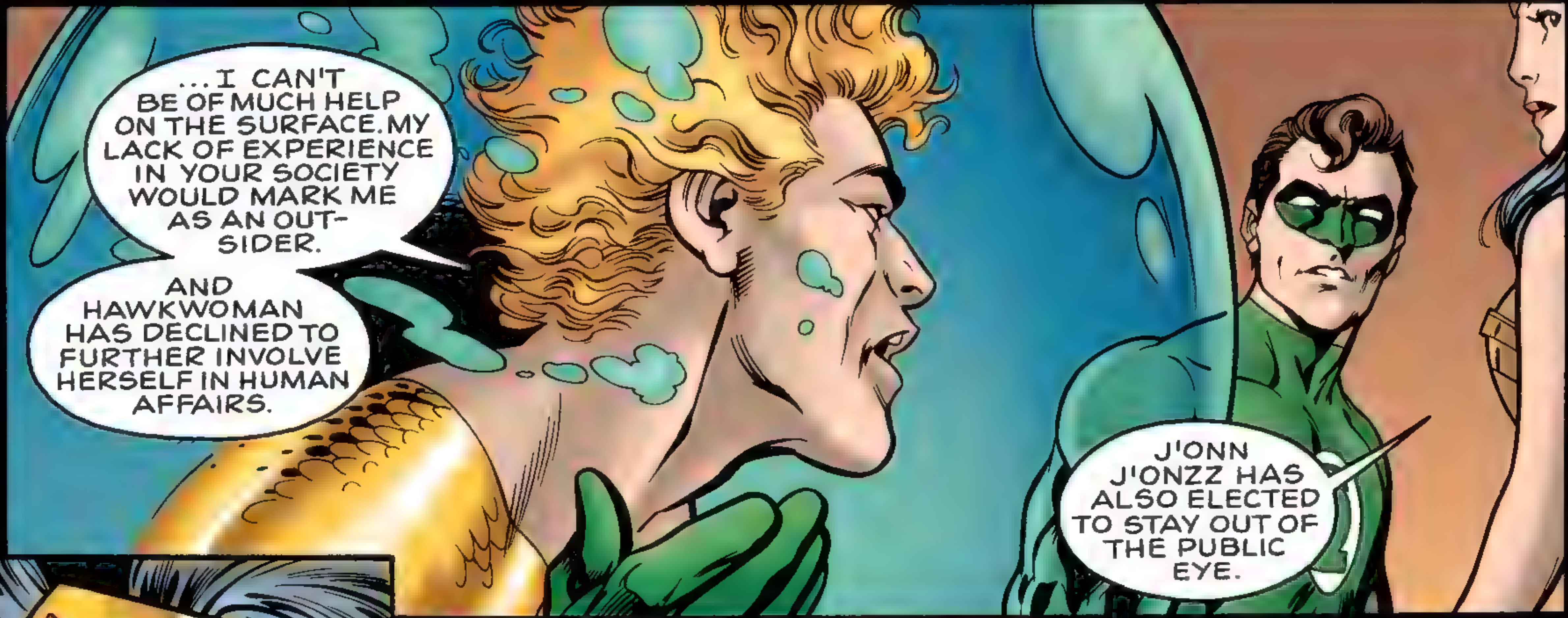
--AND ITS MERE EXISTENCE PROVES WE'RE FACING A TRULY POWERFUL OPPONENT.



WE NEED TO LOCATE WHOEVER, OR WHATEVER, THEY ARE.

BUT DISCREETLY. WE DO NOT WANT TO GIVE THE HATE CAMPAIGNERS ANY MORE AMMUNITION.

THAT WON'T BE EASY...



...I CAN'T BE OF MUCH HELP ON THE SURFACE. MY LACK OF EXPERIENCE IN YOUR SOCIETY WOULD MARK ME AS AN OUTSIDER.

AND HAWKWOMAN HAS DECLINED TO FURTHER INVOLVE HERSELF IN HUMAN AFFAIRS.

J'ONN J'ONZZ HAS ALSO ELECTED TO STAY OUT OF THE PUBLIC EYE.



WE SHOULD BEGIN OUR INVESTIGATION BY ASSESSING THE CURRENT STATUS OF KNOWN VILLAINS.



I CAN DO THAT, DIANA. YOU'D BE MORE EFFECTIVE CONTACTING YOUR FRIENDS IN THE *WHITE HOUSE*.

THEY'RE OUR BEST BET OF COUNTERING THE HATE CAMPAIGN.

I WILL DO WHAT I CAN.



I'M THE BEST QUALIFIED TO CHECK OUT THE *THINKER*. HE IS BOUND TO HAVE IMPROVED HIS SECURITY SINCE THE LAST TIME I VISITED HIM.

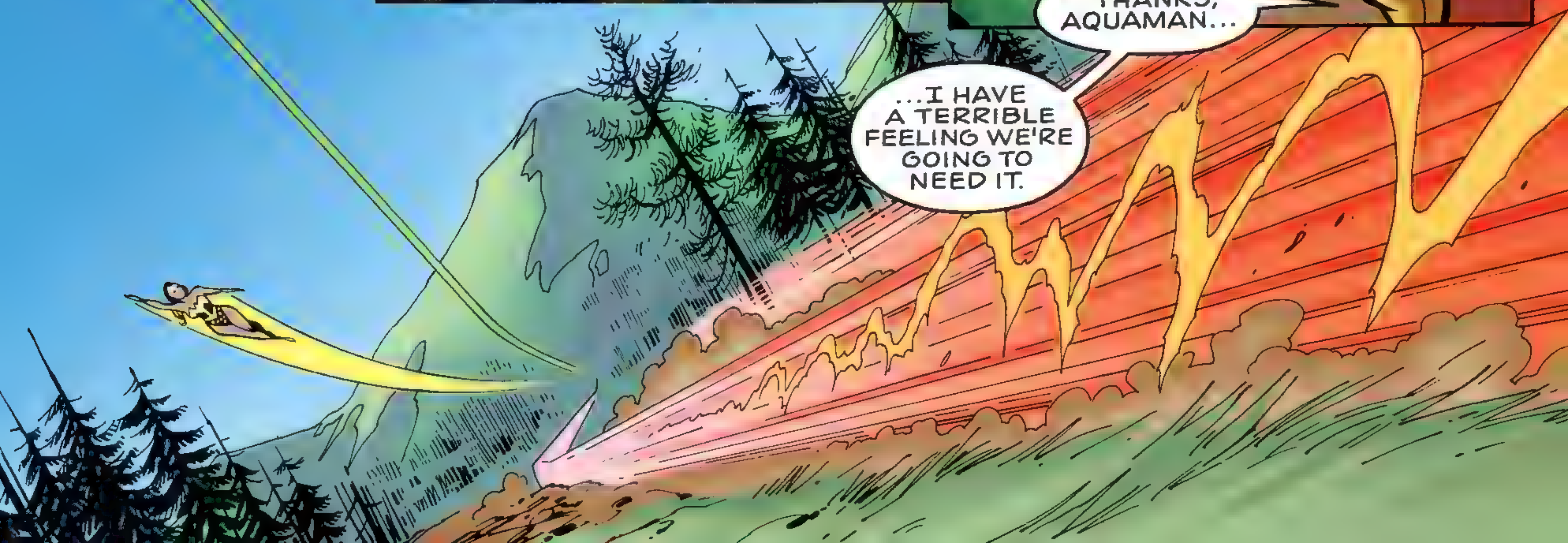
AND I'LL TRY TO DETECT THE SOURCE OF THE PLANETARY FORCE FIELD.




THAT'S THE BEST LEAD TO FINDING ITS CREATOR.

GOOD LUCK, MY FRIENDS.

THANKS, AQUAMAN...



...I HAVE A TERRIBLE FEELING WE'RE GOING TO NEED IT.



OA, HOMEWORLD OF THE
GUARDIANS OF THE
UNIVERSE AND HEAD-
QUARTERS TO THE
GREEN LANTERN CORPS.

WHAT'S
GOING ON,
KATMA
TUI?

IT MUST BE
CATASTROPHIC,
CHUMMUCK. ALL
3600 OF THE
CORPS HAVE BEEN
SUMMONED.

I HEARD
A REPORT OF A
LANTERN DISTRESS
SIGNAL IN SECTOR
2814, NEAR
EARTH.

IF THAT
WERE TRUE, ARISIA,
THE GUARDIANS WOULD
HAVE SENT US THERE
DIRECTLY.

THEN WHAT
DO YOU THINK IT IS,
TOMAR RE?

THE NEW
GOD WAR.

I THOUGHT
THE CORPS AVOIDED
GETTING INVOLVED IN
THE FEUD BETWEEN
APOKOLIPS AND
NEW GENESIS.

THAT WAS
TRUE, GREEN
LANTERN OF
2815.

GUARDIAN?!

THE BALANCE
OF POWER HAS
CHANGED.

DARKSEID
HAS UNLEASHED
FORCES THAT SPILL
OUT FAR BEYOND
THE CONFLICT.

THE ENTIRE
CORPS WILL BE
HARD PRESSED TO
CONTAIN THIS
INSANITY.

NO ONE
CAN BE SPARED
TO INVESTIGATE
THE CRISIS ON
EARTH.

WHATEVER
THE DANGER,
HAL JORDAN
MUST FACE
IT ALONE.

STAR CITY.

J'ONN.
SORRY FOR
BUSTING IN
ON...

OH!
FORGIVE
ME...

I WAS
TRYING
TO MAKE A
DISCREET
ENTRANCE.

I DIDN'T
EXPECT... I
MEAN--

I KNOW
YOU PREFER
NOT TO BE SEEN
IN YOUR TRUE
FORM.

NOT A
PREFERENCE. A
PRACTICALITY.

MOST
SPECIES FIND
IT EASIER TO
RELATE TO
PHYSICALLY
SIMILAR
BEINGS.

I ADOPTED
THIS HYBRID
FORM AS A
COMPROMISE.

I CAN
COMFORTABLY
MAINTAIN IT
FOR LONG
PERIODS...

... AND, I BELIEVED
IT WAS INOFFENSIVE TO
HUMAN SENSIBILITIES.
I WAS WRONG.

C'MON, J'ONN.
I'M NOT REPELLED
BY YOUR APPEARANCE
... IN EITHER FORM.

YOU ARE A
GREEN LANTERN.
VIRTUALLY UNIQUE
AMONG MEN.

THIS HATE
CAMPAIGN
REMINDS ME
I HAVE TAKEN
FOR GRANTED
THE LEAGUE'S
ACCEPTANCE.

YOU HAVE
EARNED YOUR
PLACE HERE, J'ONN.
THE EARTH IS
YOUR HOME.

I
WAS TORN
FROM MY OWN
WORLD AND TIME.
STRANDED. MY OLD
LIFE FOREVER
DENIED TO
ME.

I EXIST
IN SOCIETY
BY DECEPTION.
APPEARING
HUMAN. HIDING
WHAT I AM
HAS FED
SUSPICION.

YOU'RE
RIGHT. IF YOU
HAD LOOKED LIKE
THE ALL-AMERICAN
HERO IT MIGHT
NOT HAVE
HAPPENED.

BUT IT
HAS. AND
WE'VE GOT
TO FIGHT
IT.

YOUR
ABILITY TO
SHAPE-SHIFT
MAKES YOU THE
IDEAL MOLE TO
DISCOVER WHO
IS BEHIND THE
CAMPAIGN.

IS THERE
ANY NEED?
MAYOR LUTHOR
IS MOST LIKELY
RESPONSIBLE.
NOT ONLY IS HE
ITS GREATEST
ADVOCATE...

...HIS
COMPANY, LEXCORP,
HAS MANUFACTURED
THE SUPER TECHNOLOGY
TO CAPTURE AND
IMPRISON META-
HUMANS...

...AND
THE ANTI-ALIEN
CAMPAIGN HEAD-
QUARTERS ARE IN
METROPOLIS.

YES. BUT
WHAT WOULD
BE HIS *MOTIVE*
FOR TRYING TO
OUTLAW META-
HUMANS?

LUTHOR IS
ONE OF THE MOST
INFLUENTIAL MEN IN
THE WORLD. CERTAINLY
THE RICHEST. WHAT
WOULD HE HAVE
TO *GAIN*?

AND,
DESPITE HIS
RENOWNED
SCIENTIFIC
GENIUS...

...THE
PLANETARY FORCE
FIELD IS LIGHT-YEARS
AHEAD OF HUMAN
TECHNOLOGY.

WHAT
WORRIES ME
IS THAT LUTHOR
MAY BE
RIGHT.

THAT THERE
IS SOME COVERT
ALIEN PRESENCE
ATTEMPTING TO
DOMINATE THE
EARTH.

THE CENTRAL
HEADQUARTERS
OF THE KOBRA
CULT. PERU.

THE MOUNTAIN
FORTRESS OF
DOCTOR TSING
TSING. TIBET.

THE SECRET CITY
OF GORILLA GRODD.
EQUATORIAL AFRICA.

THE SUBTERRA-
NEAN LAIR OF THE
BROTHERHOOD OF
EVIL. PARIS, FRANCE.

DEVASTATED.

TOTALLY
DESTROYED.

DECIMATED.

THIS IS GETTING
MONOTONOUS...

...AND
PRETTY
SCARY.

I CAN'T
FIND A SINGLE
CLUE TO WHO HAS
WIPED OUT MOST OF
EARTH'S MAJOR
VILLAINS...

...AND I'M
RUNNING OUT
OF SUSPECTS.

BINGO.
THERE'S RA'S
AL GHUL'S
DEN.

AND
IT LOOKS
LIKE I'VE
ARRIVED
JUST IN
TIME.

THE
FIGHTING IS
STILL GOING
ON.





IT'S THE
AMAZO
ANDROID.

RA'S
AND HIS MEN
DON'T STAND
A CHANCE.

NOR ARE YOU, ROBOT--**DOCTOR
MAGNUS** WAS SUPPOSED TO
DISMANTLE YOU...

... AFTER THE LAST
TIME THE **JLA** KICKED
YOUR BUTT.

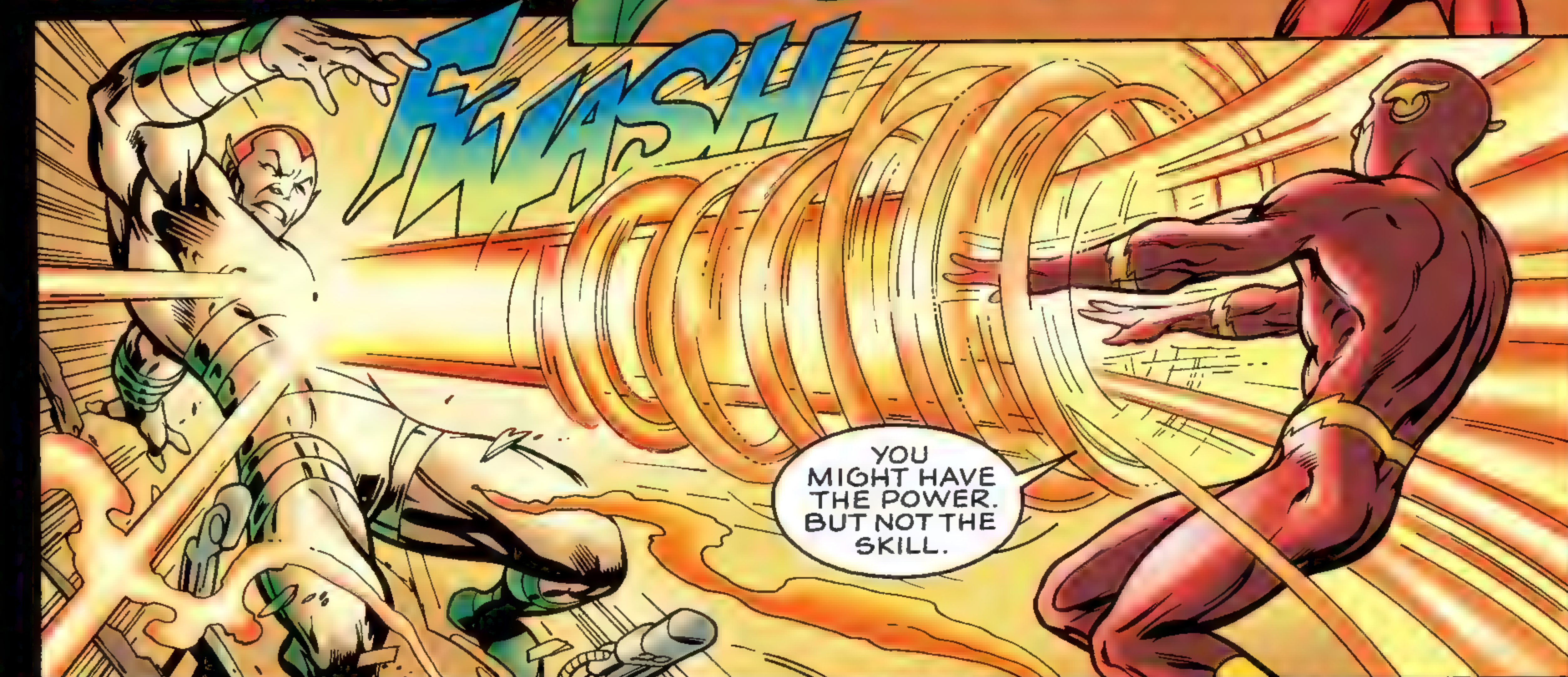
THE FLASH?
YOU ARE NOT
MEANT TO BE
HERE.

THEY
MAY BE A
BUNCH OF CUT-
THROATS AND
ASSASSINS...

BUT
I'VE GOT TO
GET THEM OUT
OF HARM'S
WAY.

BUT NOW
YOU ARE ALONE,
WHILE I CAN
DUPLICATE THE
POWER OF EVERY
METAHUMAN
I HAVE EN-
COUNTERED...

...INCLUDING
YOUR OWN.



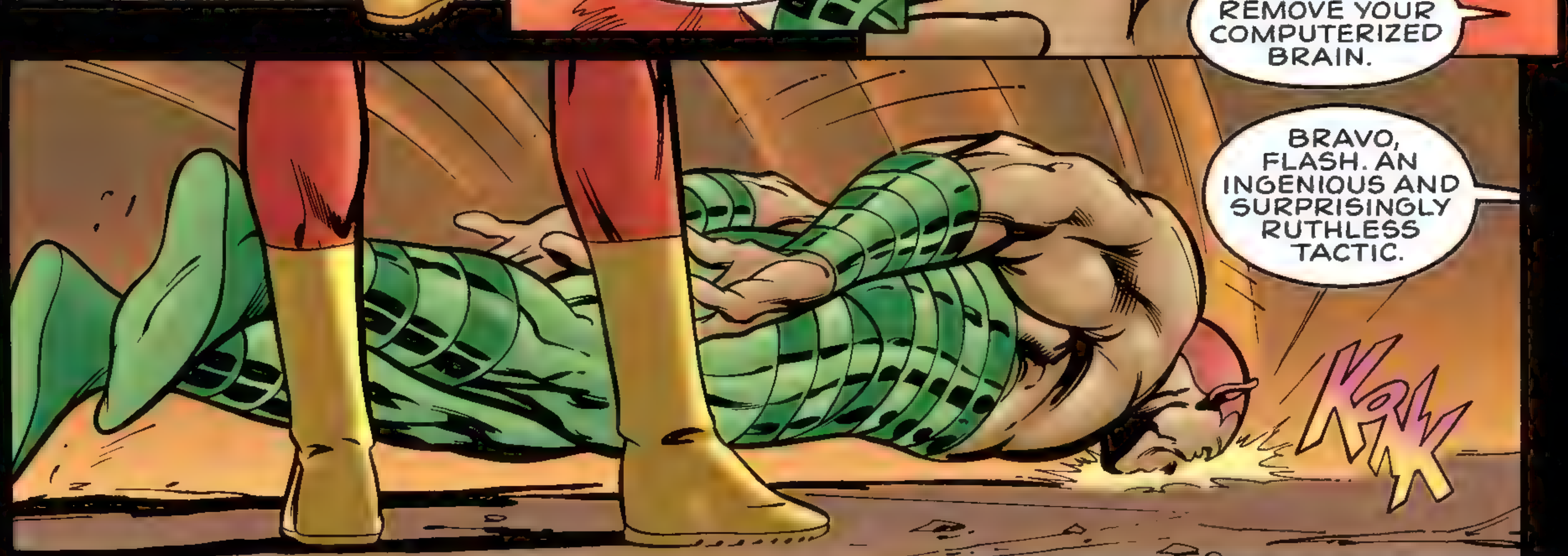
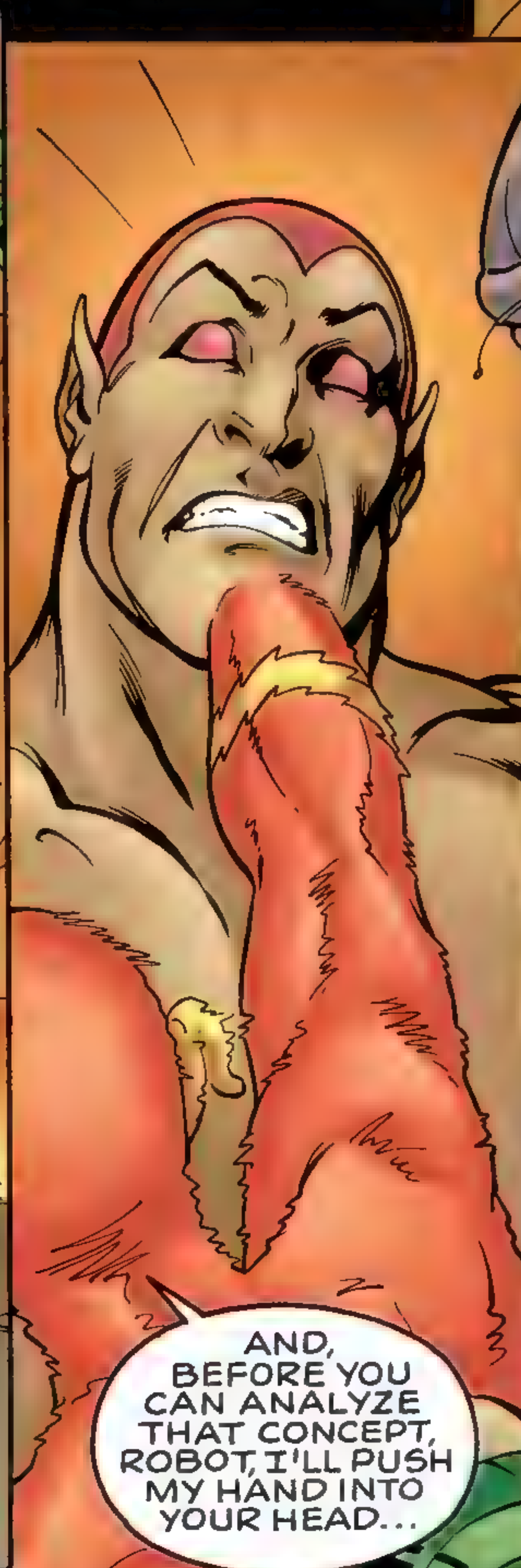
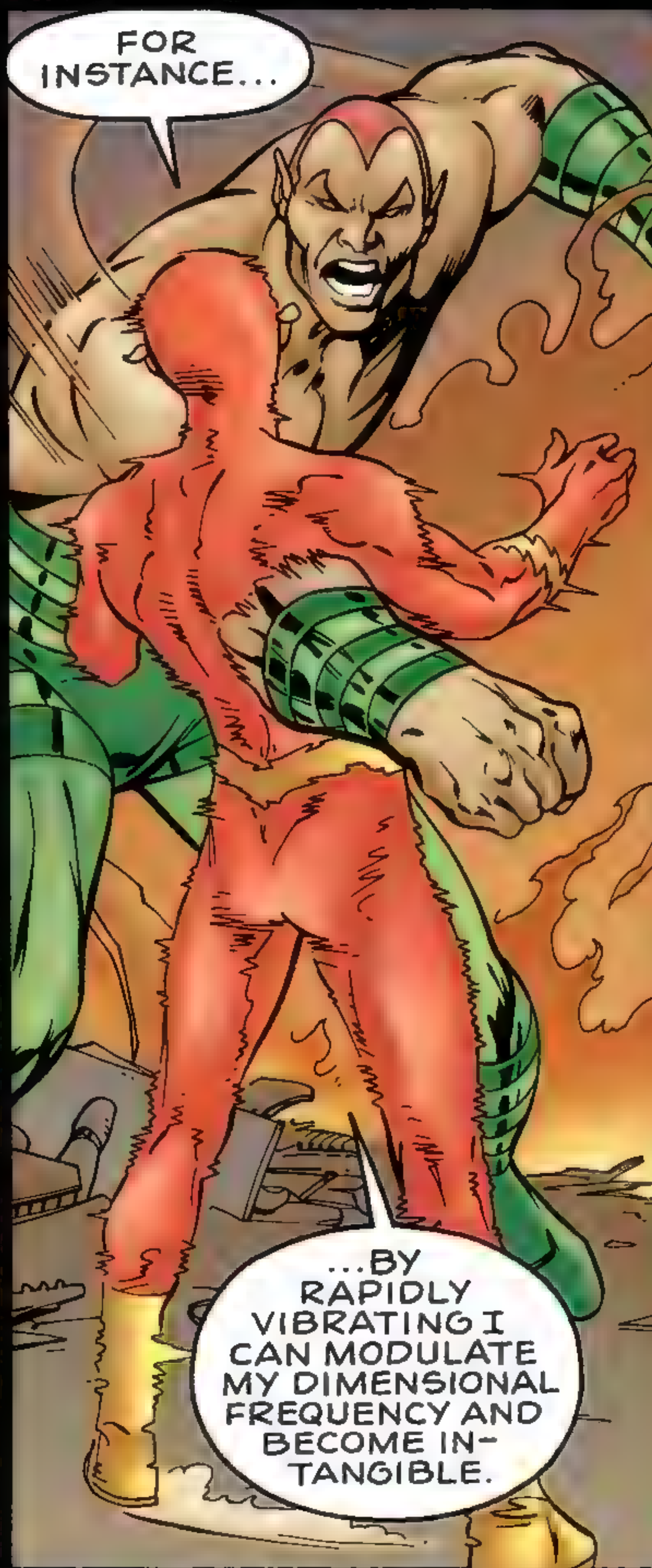
YOU
MIGHT HAVE
THE POWER.
BUT NOT THE
SKILL.



I CAN DO
ANYTHING
YOU CAN.

CORRECTION.
YOU CAN *COPY*
ANYTHING
I DO.

YOU'RE
A MACHINE.
YOU DON'T HAVE
THE CREATIVITY
TO IMAGINE THE
FULL POTENTIAL
OF SUPER
SPEED.



IS THAT A RIDDLE OR A NAME?

INITIALLY, THE ATTACKS ON MY ORGANIZATION APPEARED TO BE SIMPLE TERRITORIAL RIVALRY...

...BY THE KOBRA, GRODD, THE NEW OLYMPIANS AND OTHERS.

RETALIATIONS QUICKLY ESCALATED INTO A WAR. A WAR FOUGHT IN REMOTE SECRECY SO THE OUTSIDE WORLD REMAINED OBVIOUS TO THE CONFLICT.



ONE WHOSE EXISTENCE IS EVIDENT ONLY IN THE PATTERN OF RANDOM EVENTS HAS NO NAME.

YOU MUST KNOW WHO YOU'RE FIGHTING?



I IMAGINE YOU WERE GRATEFUL FOR THE LULL IN WHAT YOU REGARD AS CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.

IT WAS TOO LATE WHEN WE DISCOVERED AN UNKNOWN AGENCY HAD USED OUR RIVALRY TO SET US AGAINST EACH OTHER.

CONTINUOUS BATTLE HAD DEPLETED OUR FORCES, LEAVING US OPEN FOR THE COUP DE GRACE...

... DELIVERED BY UNWITTING PAWNS SUCH AS AMAZO.

AND, WITH YOUR CRIMINAL EMPIRES ELIMINATED, RA'S, METAHUMAN HEROES COULD BE SAFELY DISCREDITED.

INDEED. THE CONQUEST IS BEGUN. THE OUTCOME INEVITABLE.

WE WERE PREPARING TO RETREAT TO A SAFE HAVEN WHEN THE ANDROID ATTACKED. YOU MAY JOIN US. IT IS THE LEAST WE CAN OFFER AFTER YOUR ASSISTANCE.



NO WAY. I'M NOT GIVING UP.

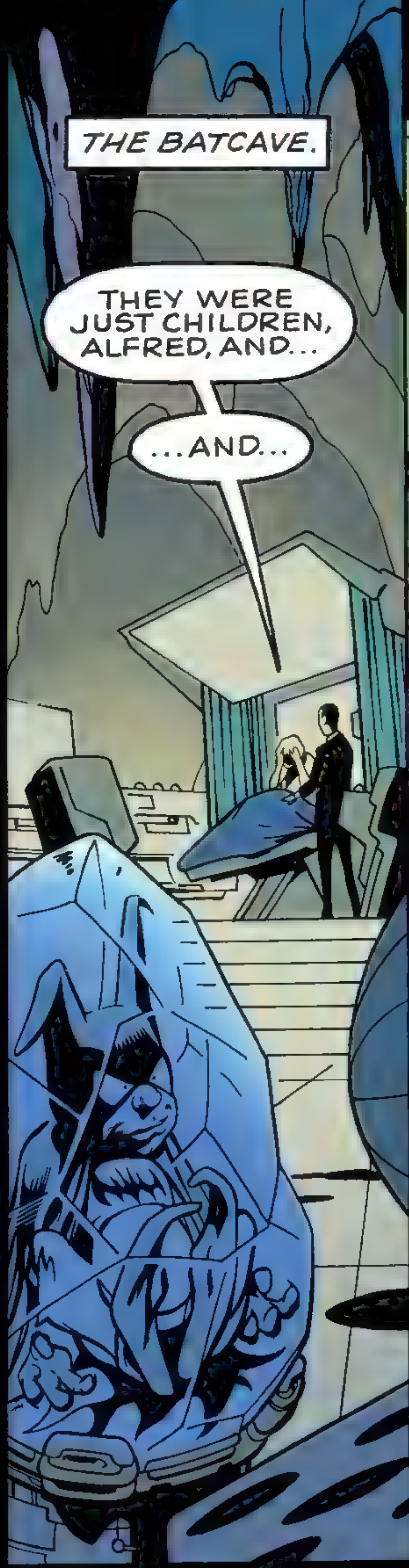
THE JLA HAVE TRIUMPHED OVER MAJOR THREATS BEFORE AND WILL DO SO AGAIN.

YOU ARE BRAWLERS. THE MASTER STRATEGIST YOU FACE DOES NOT INVOLVE HIMSELF IN THE BATTLE.



HE WILL PIT YOU ONE AGAINST THE OTHER.

TRUST NO ONE.



THE BATCAVE.

THEY WERE
JUST CHILDREN,
ALFRED, AND...

...AND...



...HE TORE
THEM...

...TORE
THEM
APART!

PLEASE,
MISS KYLE.
TRY TO REST.



NO. NEVER.
NOT UNTIL THE
JOKER PAYS.

DEAD?
HOW..?

HE IS
ALREADY
DEAD.

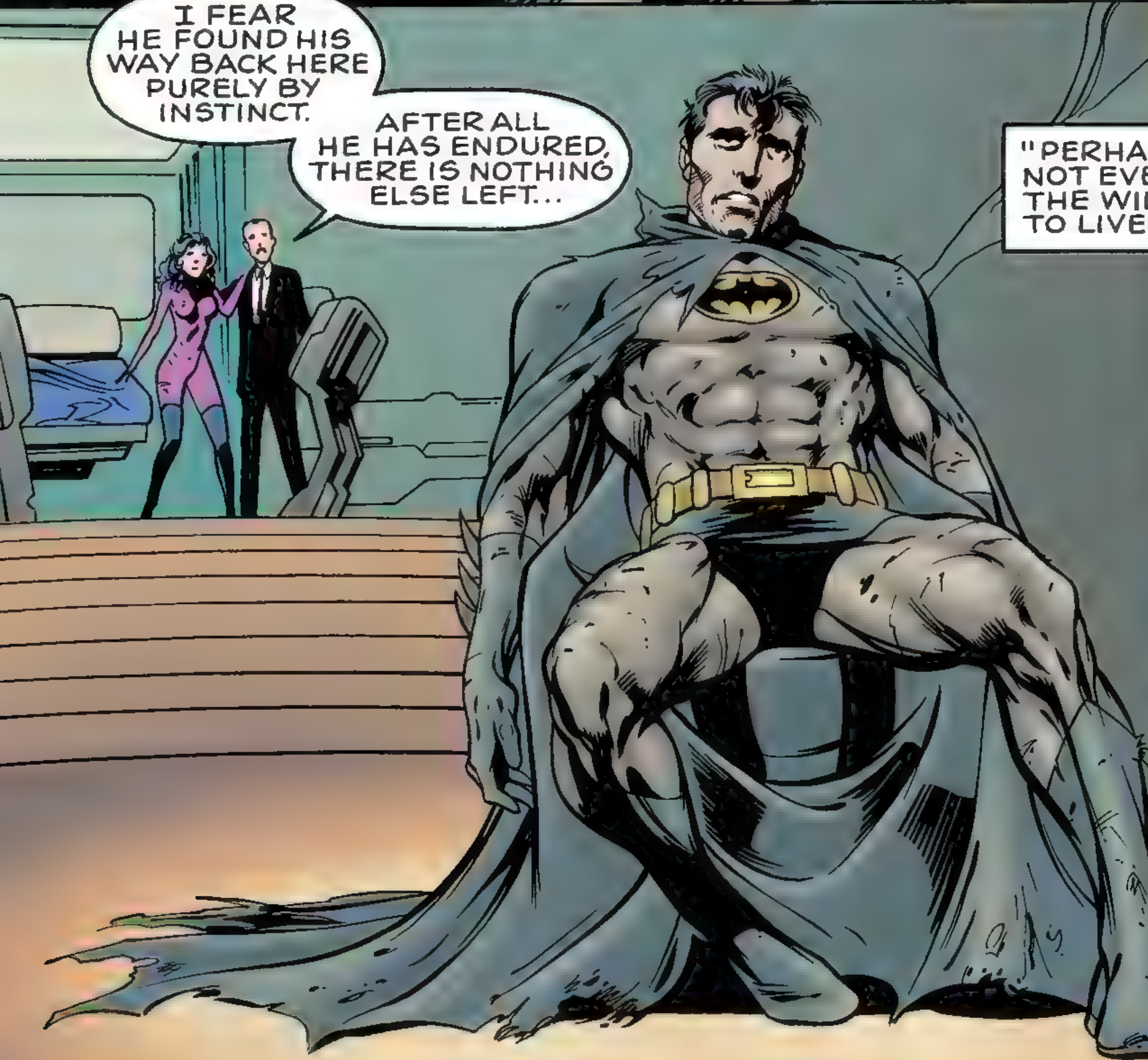
THE
BATMAN
...HE...

IT WAS
ON THE
TELEVISION.



I DON'T
KNOW IF
IT WAS A
DELIBERATE
ACT OR AN
ACCIDENT--

-- MASTER
BRUCE HASN'T
SPOKEN A
WORD SINCE
RETURNING.



I FEAR
HE FOUND HIS
WAY BACK HERE
PURELY BY
INSTINCT.

AFTER ALL
HE HAS ENDURED,
THERE IS NOTHING
ELSE LEFT...

"PERHAPS
NOT EVEN
THE WILL
TO LIVE."



COLORADO. NEAR
THE RESIDENCE OF
CLIFFORD DEVOE,
A.K.A. THE THINKER.

DESPITE THE
CURRENT CRISIS,
I'M KINDA LOOKING
FORWARD TO
THIS.

EVEN THE
FLASH AND GREEN
LANTERN COULDN'T
GET THROUGH
THIS PLACE'S
SECURITY...

... BUT
I DID.

DEVOE NEVER
FIGURED OUT
HOW.

WITH AN
EGO AS BIG
AS HIS SUPER
INTELLECT...

... HE
COULDN'T
CONCEIVE
THAT, LIKE
DAVID
AGAINST
GOLIATH...

... THE
ATOM WOULD
ONLY NEED A
CATAPULT...

IN
ADDITION
TO ABSOLUTE
CONTROL OF
MY SIZE AND
WEIGHT.

AT EIGHTY
POUNDS I CAN
PULL BACK, TAKE
AIM...

... SHIFT
TO A FEW
OUNCES...

... AND
FIRE MYSELF
THROUGH THE
OUTER SENSOR
NET.

WITH NO
MECHANICAL
OR METAHUMAN
ENERGY TO BETRAY
ME, I'LL REGISTER
AS NOTHING
MORE THAN
AN INSECT.

AT THE
APEX OF MY
TRAJECTORY I'LL
TURN WEIGHT-
LESS...

... RISE
ON THE UP-
DRAFT...

... UNTIL I
GET ABOVE
ONE OF THE
LABORATORY
TOWER'S AIR
INTAKE
VENTS.

THEN
DROP LIKE A
STONE.

SHRINKING
TO THE SIZE
OF A GRAIN OF
POLLEN AS I
GO...



...SO
I'M SMALL
ENOUGH TO BODY-
SURF THROUGH
THE INTAKE
TURBINE.

POW!

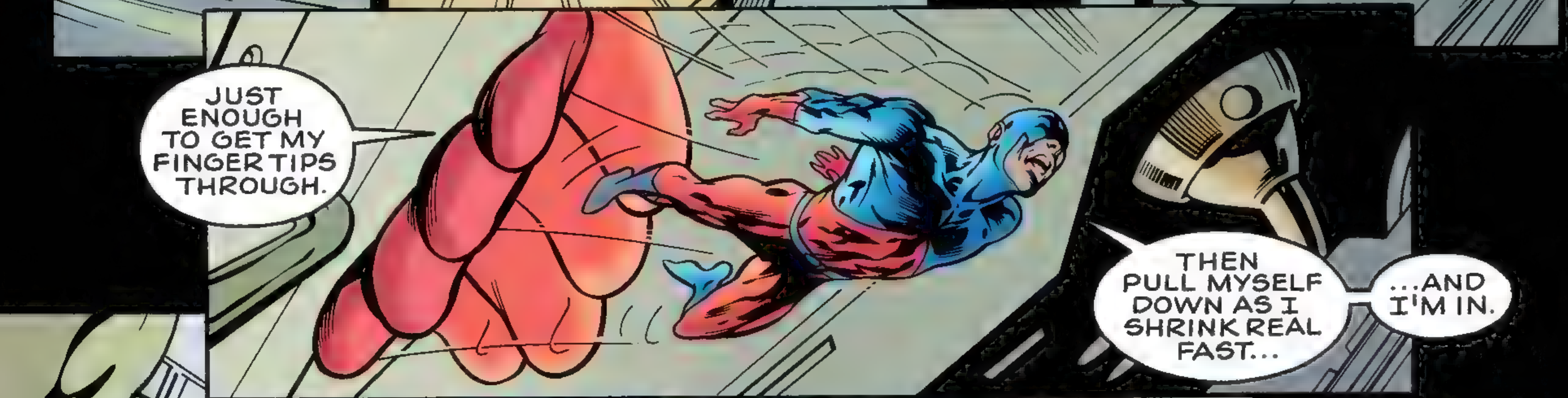
I CAN'T
RISK GOING
THROUGH
IT.

IF I GROW
LARGE ENOUGH
TO REACH THE
DUCT WALL, I
CAN SNAG A
SEAM...

YOOWCH!
THAT BUG
GOT ZAPPED
BY SOME SORT
OF ENERGY NET
UP AHEAD. THAT
WASN'T HERE
LAST TIME.

IT COULD BE
SET TO VAPORIZE
ANYTHING LARGER
THAN A MOLECULE
OR...
... ANYTHING
THAT ISN'T
AIR.

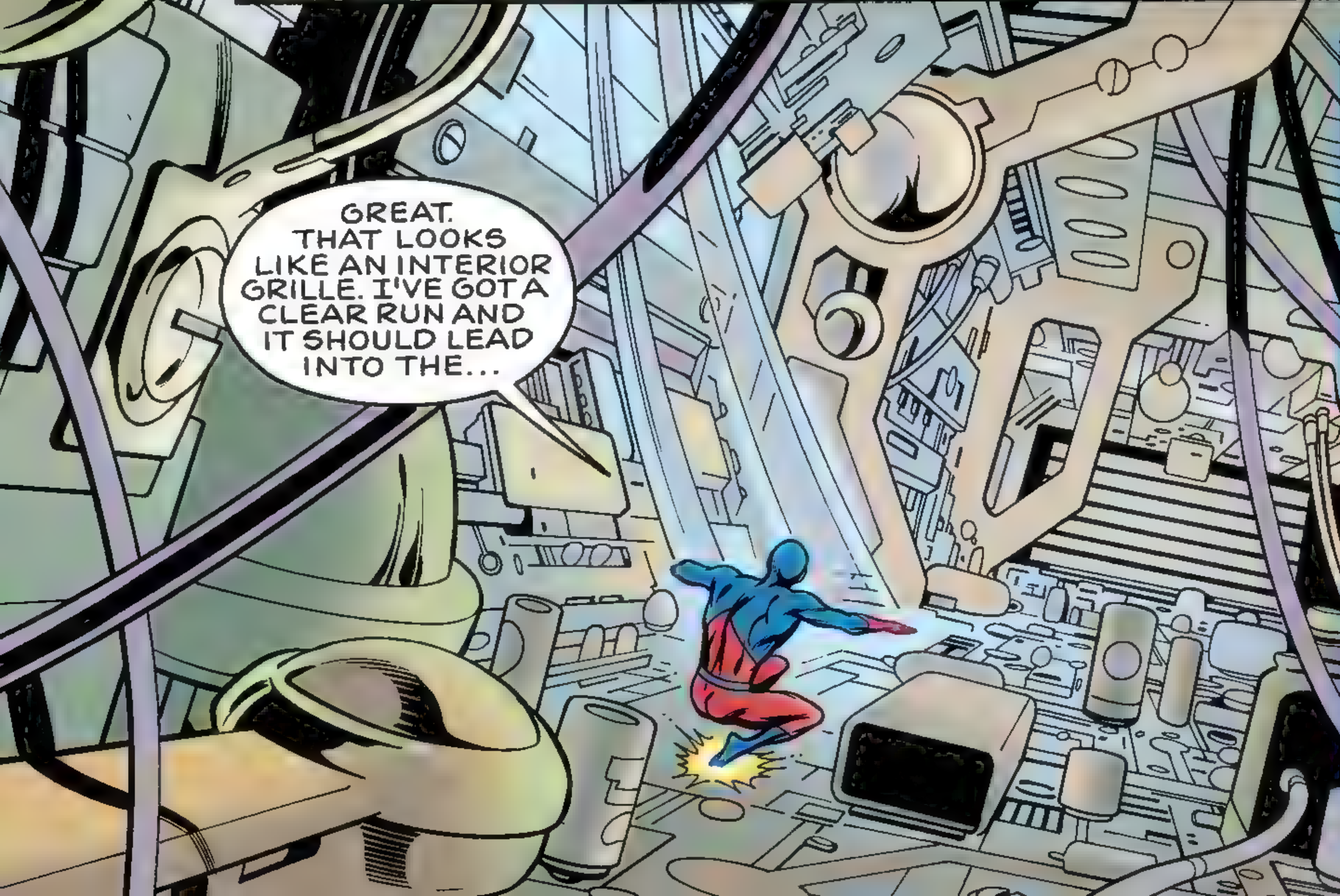
...AND
PRY IT OPEN.



JUST
ENOUGH
TO GET MY
FINGER TIPS
THROUGH.

THEN
PULL MYSELF
DOWN AS I
SHRINK REAL
FAST...

...AND
I'M IN.



GREAT.
THAT LOOKS
LIKE AN INTERIOR
GRILLE. I'VE GOT A
CLEAR RUN AND
IT SHOULD LEAD
INTO THE...



UH OH...

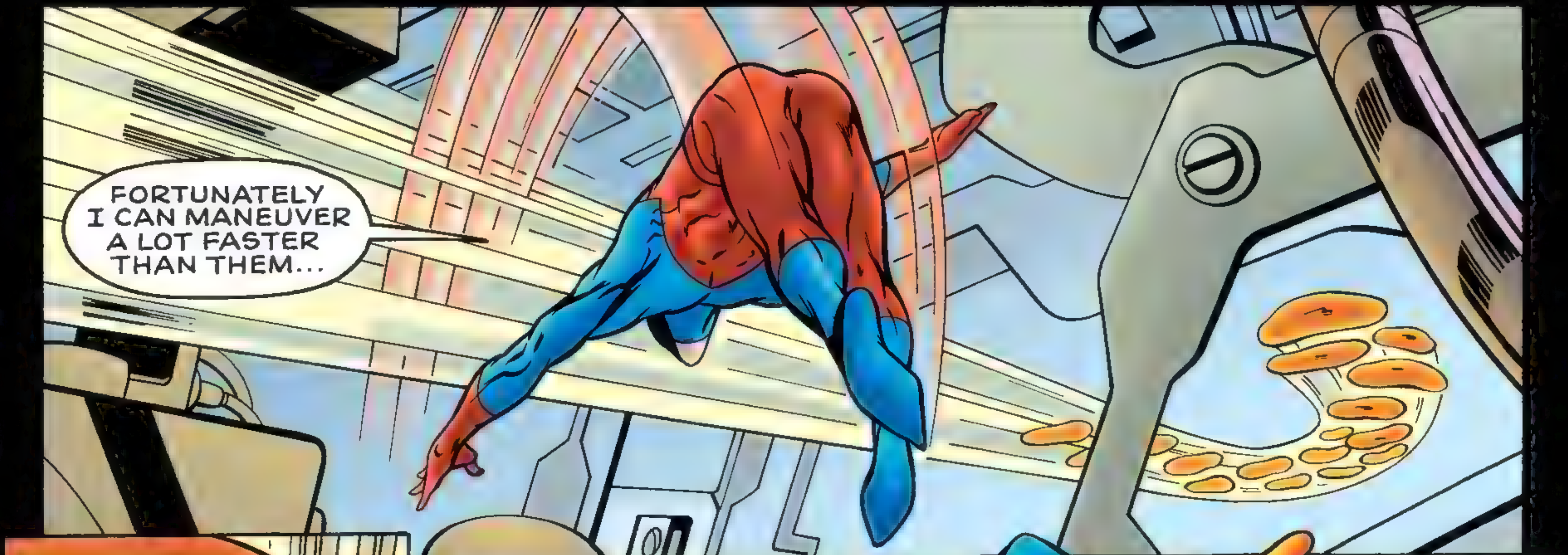


THEY
LOOK LIKE SOME
SORT OF AMOEBIC
WATCHDOGS.

MICROSCOPIC
PROPULSION AND
TARGETING SYSTEMS
FOR A NUCLEUS...

...WITH
AN EXTERNAL
PLASMA PAYLOAD.
I'D RATHER NOT
FIND OUT WHAT
IT DOES.

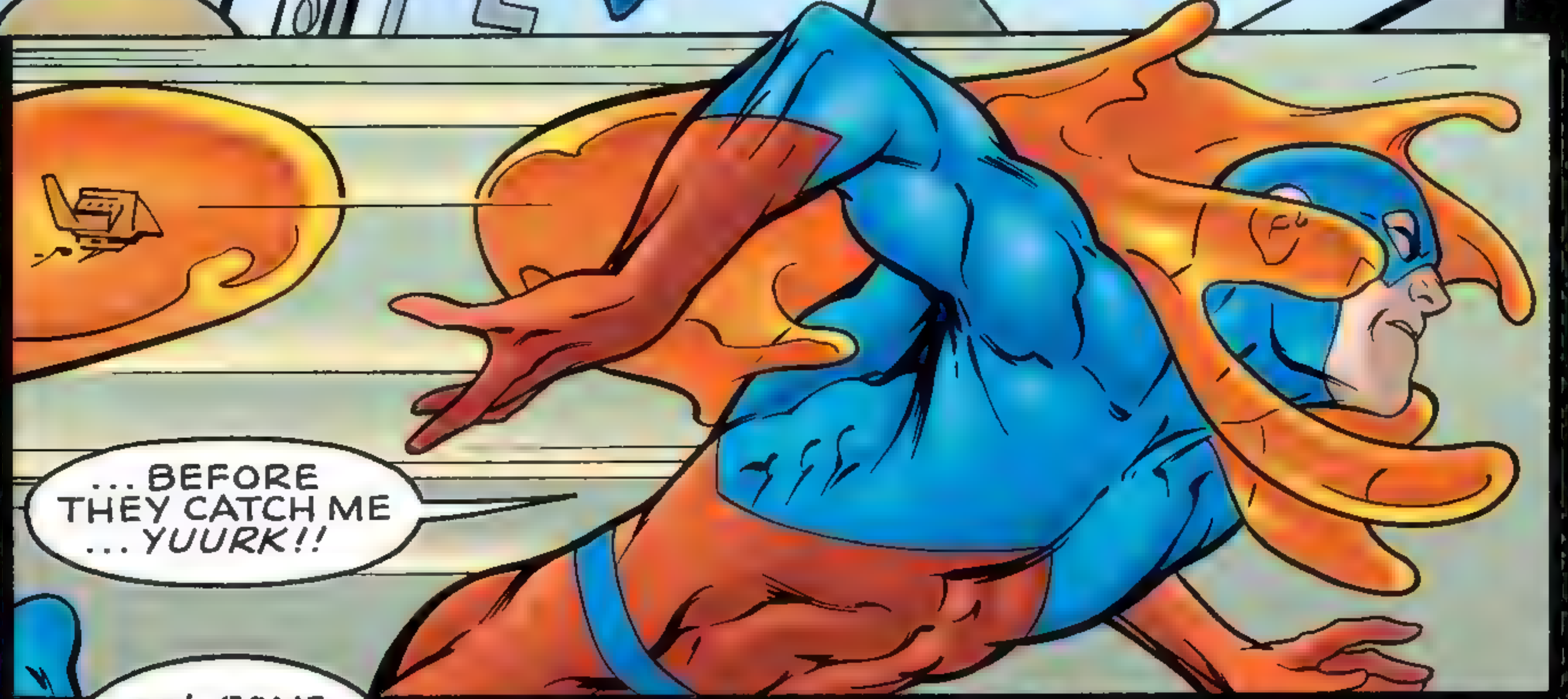
SPLO



FORTUNATELY
I CAN MANEUVER
A LOT FASTER
THAN THEM...



...AND
IF I CAN
MAKE IT
THROUGH
THE AIR
VENT...



... BEFORE
THEY CATCH ME
... YUURK!!



gah SOME
SORT OF
GELATINOUS
ADHESIVE...



... SMOTHERING
ME...choke

... ONLY
CHANCE IS...
GET OUTSIDE
... SO I CAN
GROW LARGE
ENOUGH.



MUST GET
THROUGH
THE VEN...



ANOTHER
FORCE FIELD.
IF I HADN'T BEEN
WRAPPED IN THAT
GLOOP I'D HAVE
FRIED.

I WAS
SAVED BY
THE THINKER'S
OWN PARANOID
EXCESS.

I'LL
HAVE TO
THANK HIM
WHEN...HEY,
THIS IS HIS
OFFICE.

HE'S PLANNING
SOMETHING. THERE
ARE PAPERS AND PRINT-
OUTS EVERYWHERE. THOSE
COLLATED NEWSPAPER
REPORTS LOOK LIKE
THE KEY.

"A REDUCTION
IN THE SPECTRUM
OF SOLAR RADIATION
REACHING THE
EARTH."

"FLUCTUATIONS
IN THE EARTH'S
MAGNETIC
FIELD."

THAT COULD
BE RELATED
TO LANTERN'S
INTERPLANETARY
FORCE FIELD.

BUT THIS
OTHER STUFF.
WEATHER
ANALYSIS.

CRIME
STATISTICS.

ALIEN
ABDUCTIONS.

FINANCIAL
MARKET
REPORTS
ON FISH
STOCKS.

I CAN'T
SEE HOW
IT'S ALL
RELATED
AND...

...THERE'S
SOMETHING
REAL BULKY
UNDER ALL
THIS MESS
...*WHA!*

IT'S DEVOE.
HE'S DEAD.

HMMM!?
HE'S GOT SOME
WEIRD CHEMICAL
COMPOUNDS
SMUDGED AROUND
HIS THROAT...BUT
THAT ISN'T WHAT
KILLED HIM.

HIS
NECK'S BEEN
BROKEN.

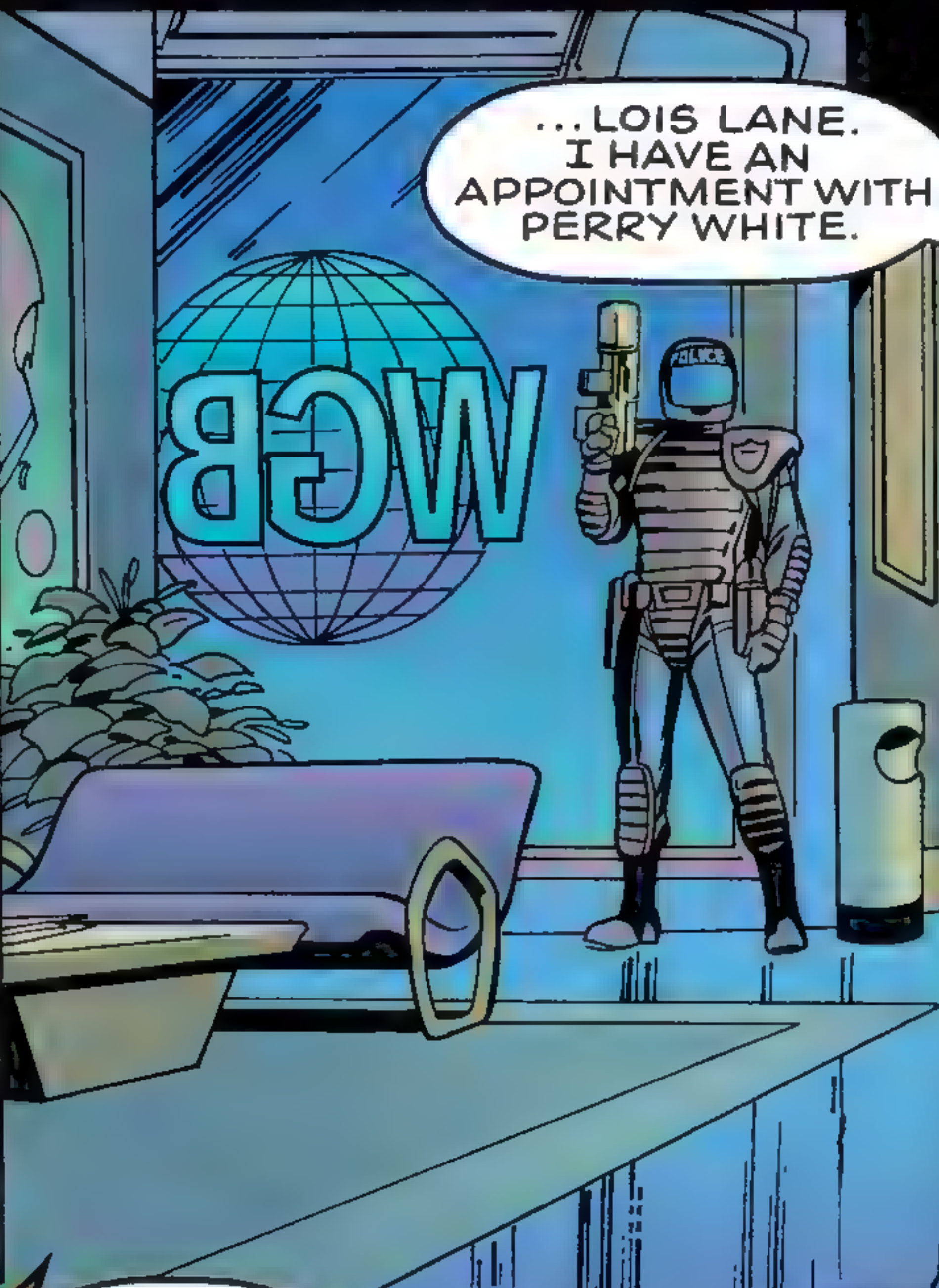
ALL THIS
CALCULATION.
IT WASN'T THE
THINKER'S PLAN
FOR A CRIME. HE'D
STUMBLED ONTO
SOMETHING. AND
IT GOT HIM
KILLED.

BUT WHO
COULD HAVE
GOT IN AND OUT
OF HERE, THROUGH
ALL THE SECURITY,
WITHOUT LEAVING
A TRACE?



METROPOLIS.
THE TV STUDIO
OF WGBS.

THE END
OF THE
WORLD
IS NIGH



... LOIS LANE.
I HAVE AN
APPOINTMENT WITH
PERRY WHITE.

MR. WHITE IS
JUST FINISHING AN
INTERVIEW WITH
MAYOR LUTHOR. IF
YOU CAN WAIT
FOR A FEW--



BAM

GUNFIRE
FROM THE
HOSPITALITY
SUITE.

STAY
BACK, MISS
LANE.

BAM



IT'S THAT
CHEMICAL FREAK,
METAMORPHO.

KEEP
THAT CANNON
SHOULDERED,
OFFICER. HE'S
TOO CLOSE TO
THE MAYOR.



BACK
AWAY,
FREAK!

YOU'RE
WASTIN' YOUR
BREATH, TRESSER.
HE'S OUTTA HIS
HEAD. TAKE
'IM OUT.



THE FREAK'S TURNIN' INTO GAS.

HE'S GETTING AWAY THROUGH THE AIR VENT.



QUICK. GET A PARAMEDIC FOR THE MAYOR.

I'M ALL RIGHT, JIMMY. CHECK ON PERRY.

HE'S DEAD, SIR. HIS NECK'S BROKE.

OH NO... PERRY!

STAY BACK, LADY.



LET HER THROUGH, OFFICER.

MISS LANE, I'M LEX LUTHOR.

YES... HELLO.

I KNOW YOU BY REPUTATION. JIMMY SPEAKS HIGHLY OF YOU... AND I KNOW YOU WERE FRIENDS OF PERRY.



HE WAS TELLING US HOW MUCH HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN... WHEN METAMORPHO ATTACKED.

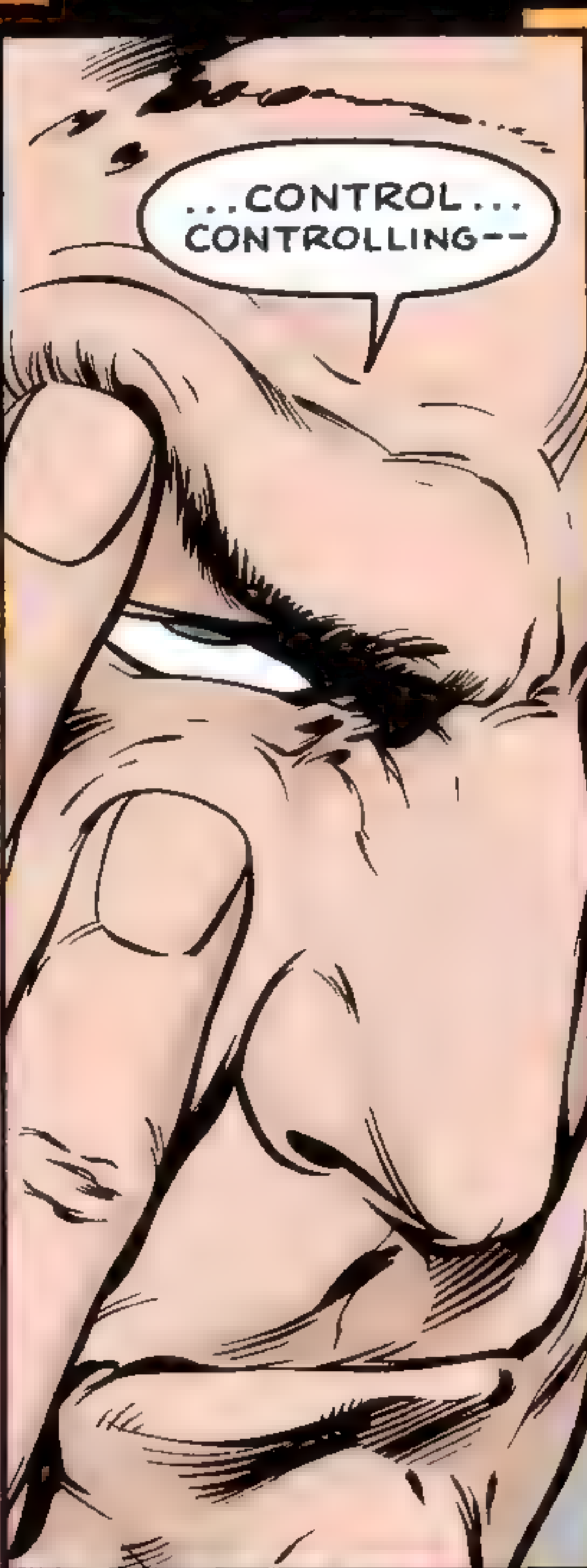
HE KNEW HE HAD MADE HIMSELF A TARGET. HE WAS A BRAVE MAN.



YOU'RE THE PRIMARY TARGET, SIR. I GUESS THE ALIENS FIGURED THEY COULD GET TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE.

BUT THEY DIDN'T COUNT ON BEING CAUGHT ON CAMERA.

JUST LIKE BATMAN.



THE CEDROS TRENCH, OFF THE BAYOU PENINSULA, CALIFORNIA.

THIS AREA OF OCEAN FLOOR IS ALSO STERILE, SIRE.

BUT AGAIN, I CAN DISCERN NO SIGN OF POLLUTION.

HUSBAND. DID YOU HEAR WHAT PROFESSOR VULKO SAID?

YES, UH...

SORRY, MERA... I WAS WONDERING HOW THE LEAGUE IS FARING.

YOU FEAR FOR YOUR FRIENDS' SAFETY?

THEY ARE THE MOST POWERFUL BEINGS ON THE PLANET... BUT YES. I AM AFRAID. BECAUSE I SENSED *THEIR* FEAR.

IF THE CRISIS THEY FACE IS AS FAR REACHING AS THEY BELIEVE, IT COULD SPILLOVER INTO OUR REALM.

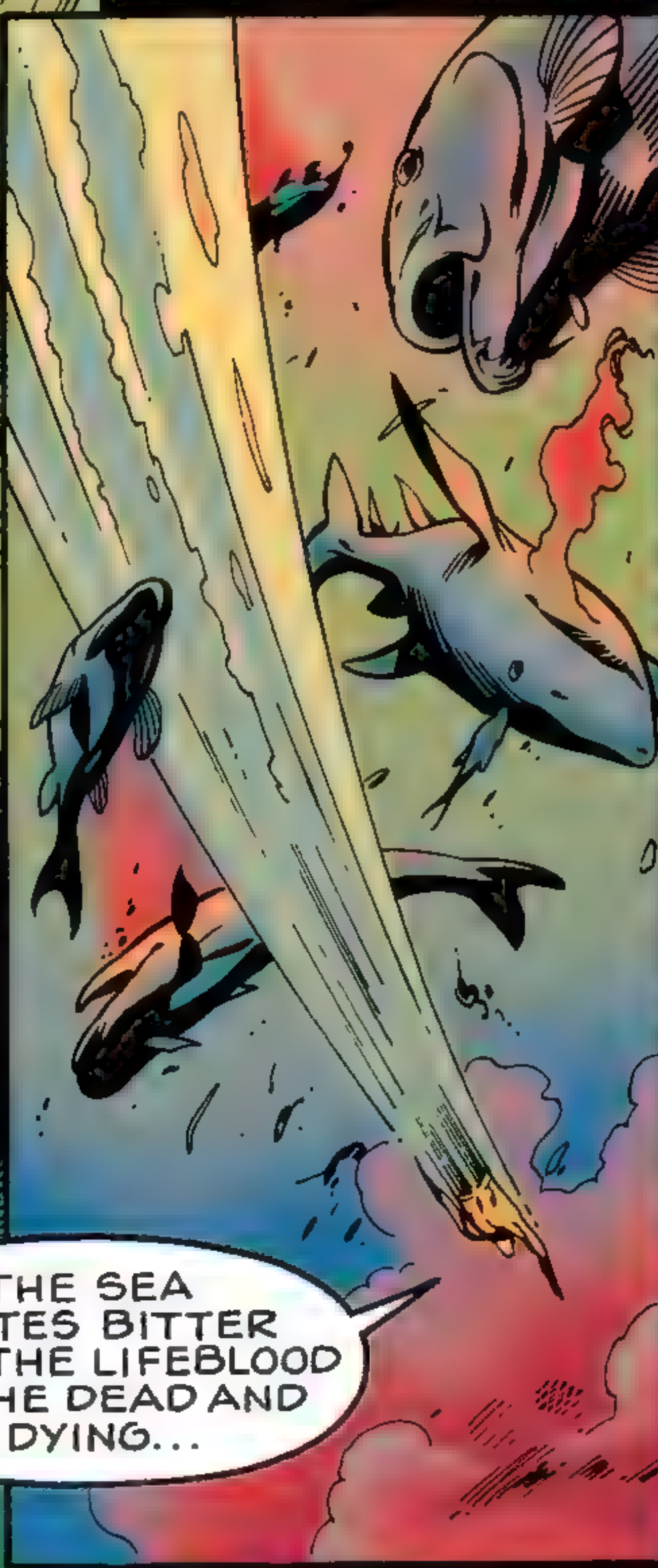
SIRE! UP AHEAD. THERE IS CONFLICT.

A SURFACE VESSEL UNDER ATTACK BY SCHOOLS OF WHALES AND --

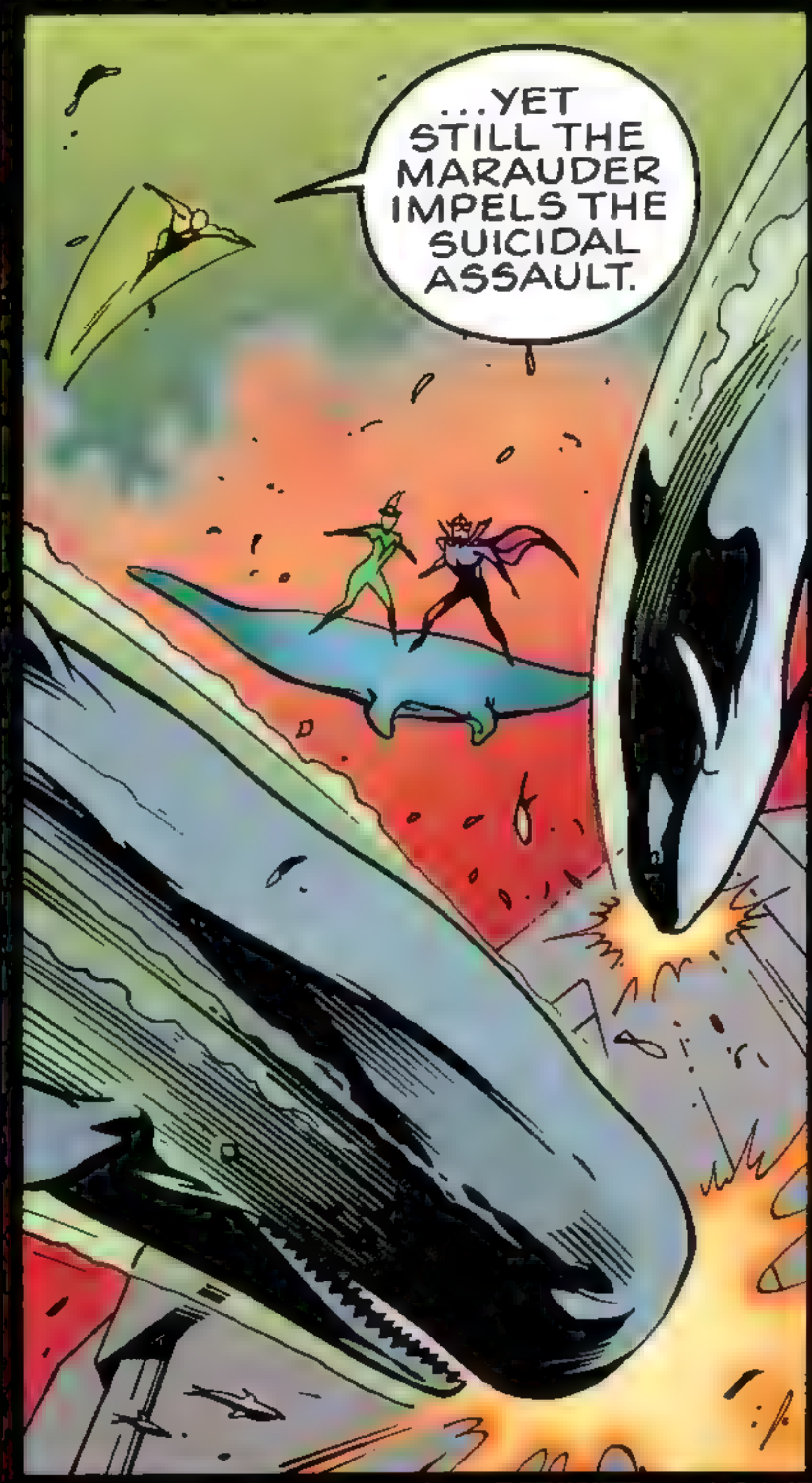
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MY BROTHER, ORM, AND HIS TELEPATHICALLY GIFTED LACKEY, MARINE MARAUDER.



YOUR ATLANTEAN CRUISER IS TOO SLOW, VULKO. FOLLOW AS YOU CAN.



THE SEA TASTES BITTER WITH THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE DEAD AND DYING...



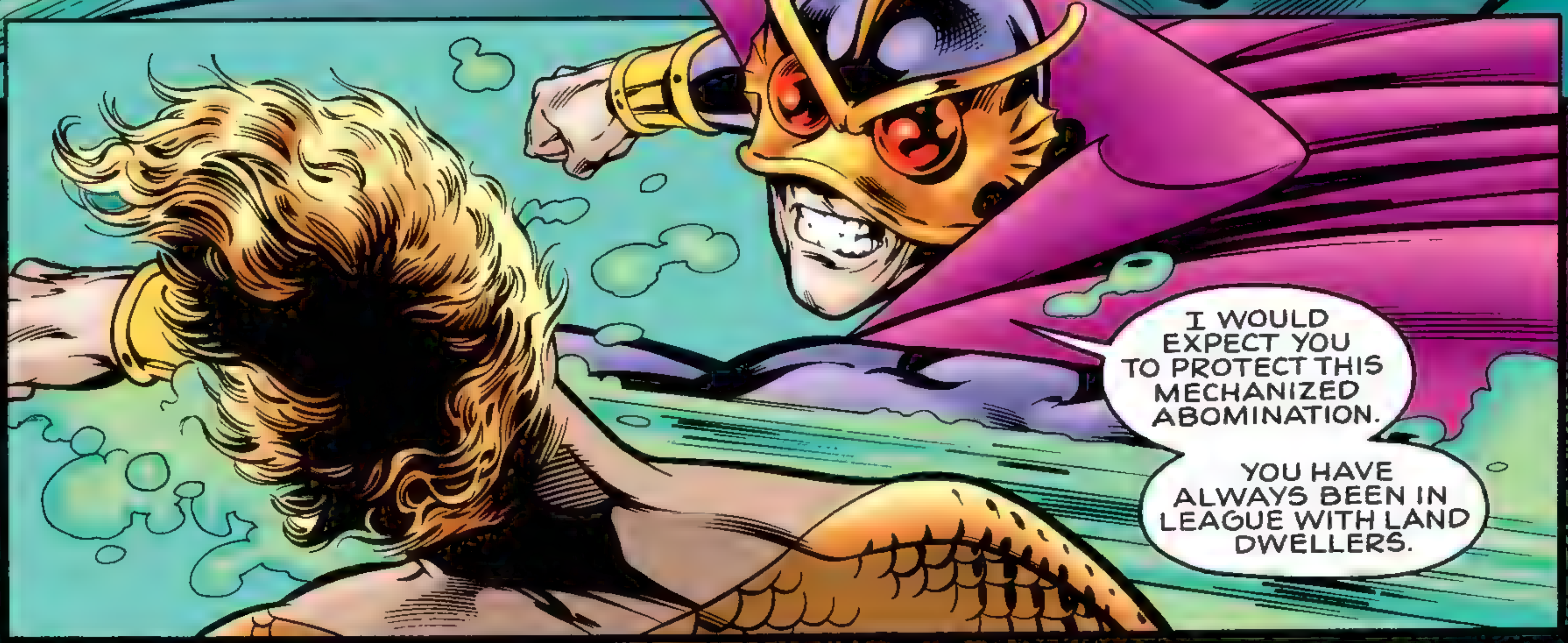
...YET STILL THE MARAUDER IMPELS THE SUICIDAL ASSAULT.



GLUURBB!

IN POSEIDON'S NAME, CEASE THIS INSANITY.

AQUAMAN!



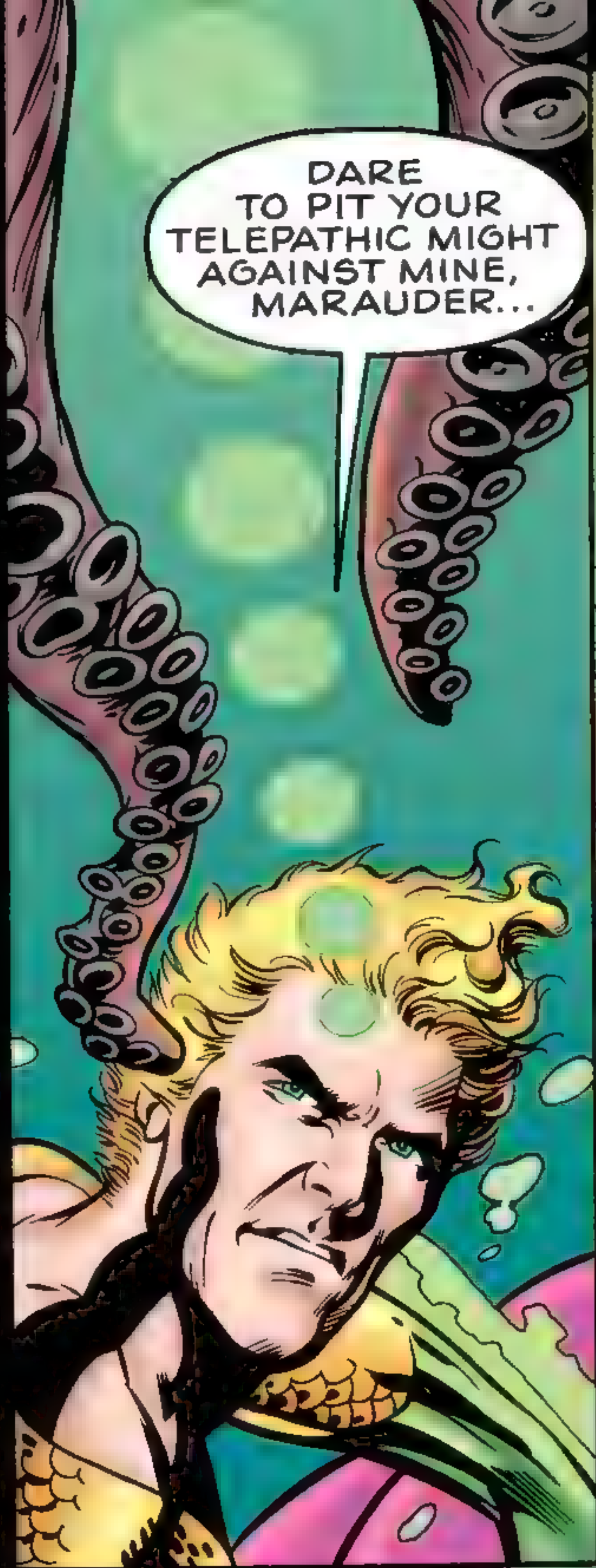
I WOULD EXPECT YOU TO PROTECT THIS MECHANIZED ABOMINATION.

YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IN LEAGUE WITH LAND DWELLERS.



I AM
SWORN TO
PROTECT ALL
LIFE IN THE
OCEAN,
ORM.

YOU'RE THE
ONE NEEDIN'
PROTECTION, YOUR
MAJESTY.



DARE
TO PIT YOUR
TELEPATHIC MIGHT
AGAINST MINE,
MARAUDER...



...AND
YOU WILL
DISCOVER
WHO IS
MASTER.



HUMANS
ARE YOUR
MASTER!

YOUR
HATRED OF
ME CANNOT
JUSTIFY THIS
MURDEROUS
ACT, ORM.



SURFACE
VESSELS ARE
GRANTED SAFE
PASSAGE THROUGH
OUR REALM BY
ANCIENT
DECREE.

ONLY
IF THEY OBEY
OUR LAWS.

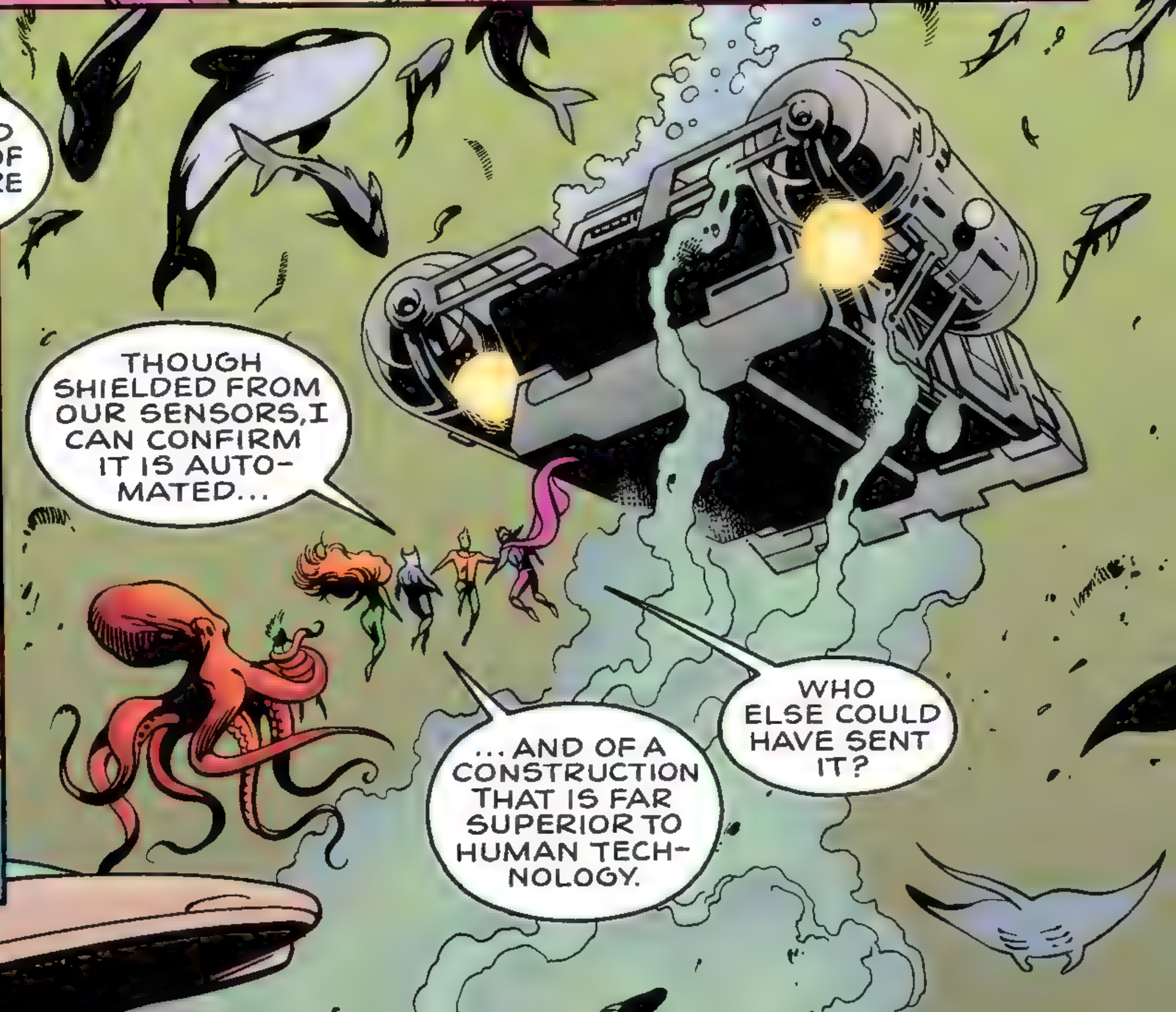
THIS
MONSTROSITY
TRAWLS THE
DEPTHS SNARING
EVERY LIVING THING
IT ENCOUNTERS.

MY
COMRADE,
THE SHARK, IS
IMPRISONED
WITHIN.



HE MAY
BE TELLING
THE TRUTH,
MY LIEGE.

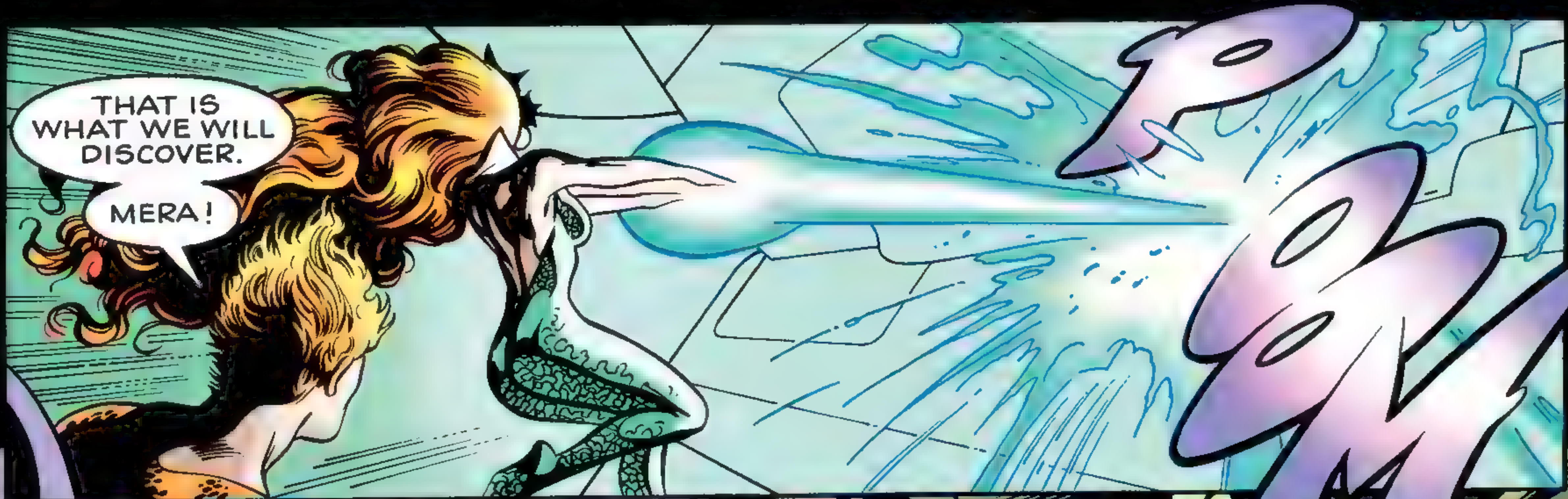
MY CALCULATIONS
CONFIRM IT ASCENDED
THROUGH THE AREAS OF
STERILE OCEAN WE WERE
INVESTIGATING.



THOUGH
SHIELDED FROM
OUR SENSORS, I
CAN CONFIRM
IT IS AUTO-
MATED...

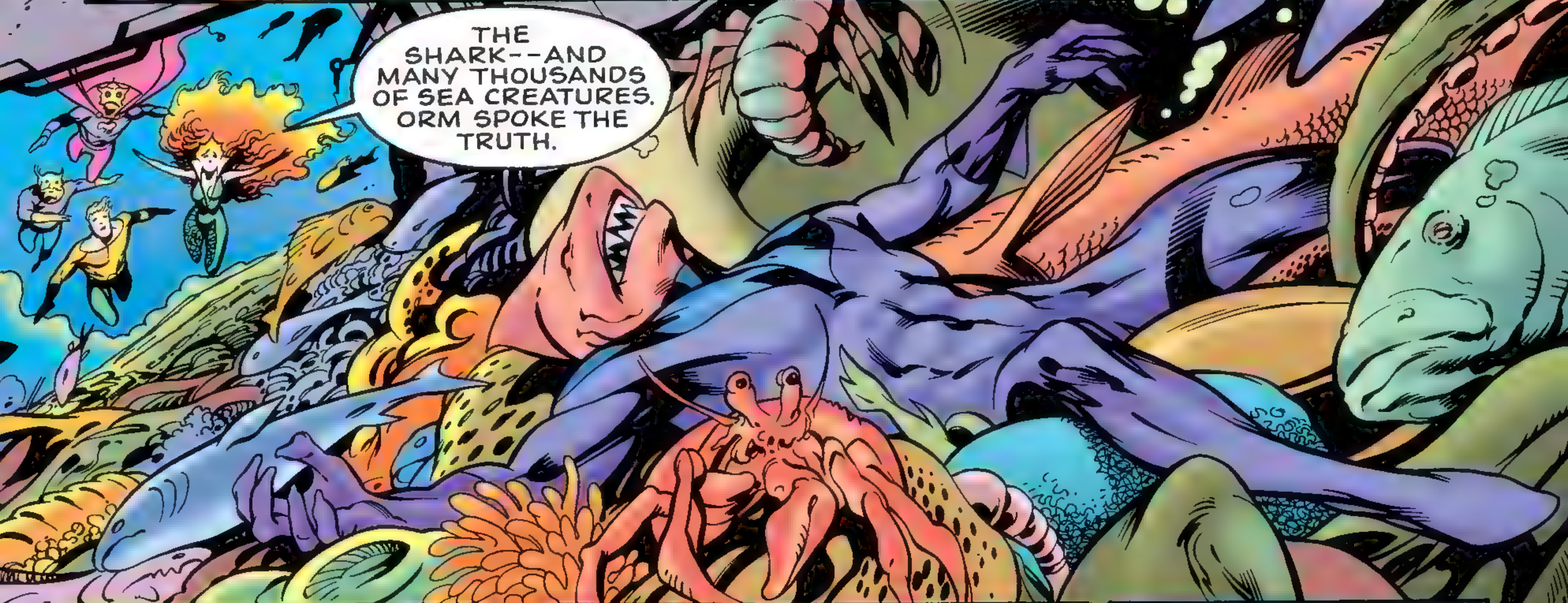
... AND OF A
CONSTRUCTION
THAT IS FAR
SUPERIOR TO
HUMAN TECH-
NOLOGY.

WHO
ELSE COULD
HAVE SENT
IT?



THAT IS
WHAT WE WILL
DISCOVER.

NERA!



THE
SHARK--AND
MANY THOUSANDS
OF SEA CREATURES.
ORM SPOKE THE
TRUTH.



NEPTUNE
PRESERVE US...
MISSILES.



THE
SHOCK WAVE
STUNNED THE
METAHUMANS,
SIR.



COLLECT THEM
AND RETURN TO
HEADQUARTERS.

A REPAIR
TEAM HAS BEEN
DISPATCHED TO
ATTEND TO THE
DREDGER.

THE BATCAVE.

WITH
PERRY WHITE
DEAD...

PETE ROSS

... AND
MAYOR LUTHOR
HOSPITALIZED...

...THE
LATEST META-
HUMAN OUTRAGE,
AT WGBS' OWN
STUDIO, PROVES
ONE THING.

NO
ONE IS
SAFE FROM
THE ALIEN
MENACE.

SENATOR
MAXWELL LORD,
CHAIRMAN OF
THE METAHUMAN
INVESTIGATION
COMMITTEE,
SAID...

"THE META-
HUMANS MUST BE
CONTROLLED--

I NEVER
THOUGHT
YOU'D GIVE UP,
BATMAN.

YOU SWARE
ON YOUR PARENTS'
GRAVE TO FIGHT
FOR JUSTICE.

WHAT ABOUT
JUSTICE FOR YOUR
PARTNERS?

ROBIN?



BRUCE...
STOP IT'S ME--
SELINA.

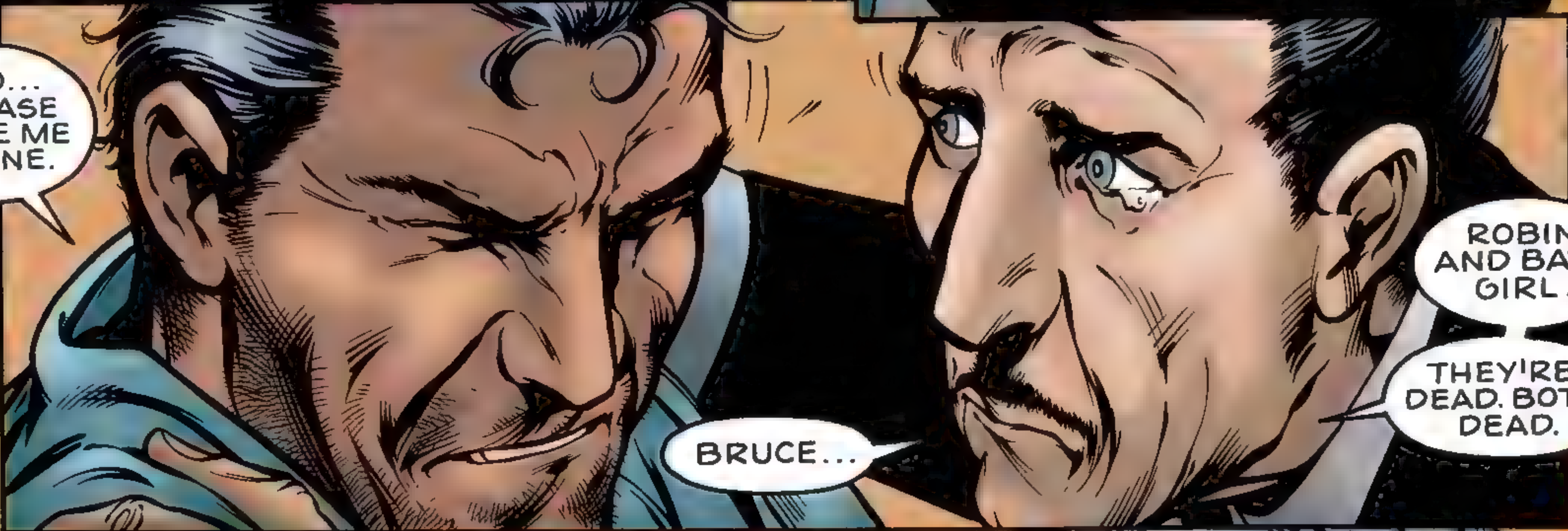
SIR,
PLEASE.



AHH...
ALFRED...

FORGIVE
THE DECEPTION,
SIR. NOTHING
ELSE HAD
WORKED.

YOU MUST
REMEMBER.



NO...
PLEASE
LEAVE ME
ALONE.

BRUCE...

ROBIN
AND BAT-
GIRL...

THEY'RE
DEAD. BOTH
DEAD.



I KNOW.

THE
JOKER
HELD MY
EYES
OPEN.

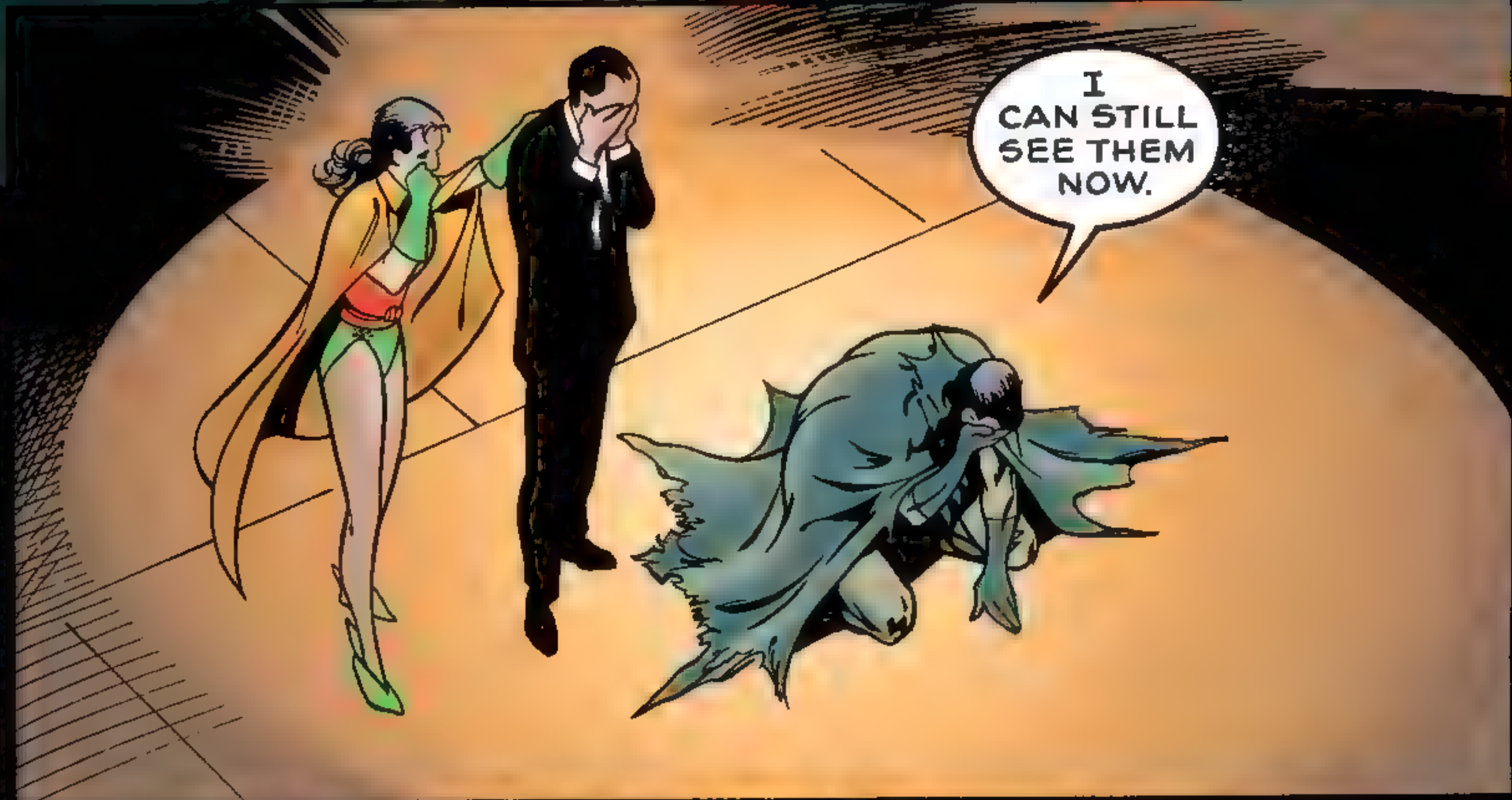
MADE ME
WATCH.



I SAW
IT...

SAW
THEM...

I
CAN STILL
SEE THEM
NOW!



I
CAN STILL
SEE THEM
NOW.

EARTHSPACE.

I CAN FEEL MY RING'S POWER FADING.

NOTHING. NO SPACESHIP. NO TRANSMITTING SATELLITE.

BUT THE FORCE-FIELD MUST HAVE A SOURCE.

SOMETHING BIG. POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CUT ME OFF FROM THE CORPS.

GOT TO FIND IT SOON. TIME IS RUNNING OUT.

THAT SCARES ME-- SO MUCH I SENT J'ONN UNDERCOVER--

AND I DIDN'T TRUST THE OTHERS ENOUGH TO TELL THEM.

DAMMIT! I'M ACTING LIKE A COWARD BECAUSE I KNOW I'M NOTHING WITHOUT MY RING.

WHU!? THE RING CONSTRUCT-- WHEN I SMASHED IT INTO THE FORCE FIELD...

...ITS ENERGY WAS LEECHED OFF.

I'VE BEEN LOOKING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION.

ALL I NEED TO DO IS ILLUMINATE THE BEAM...

...AND FOLLOW IT TO THE SOURCE OF THE FORCE-FIELD.

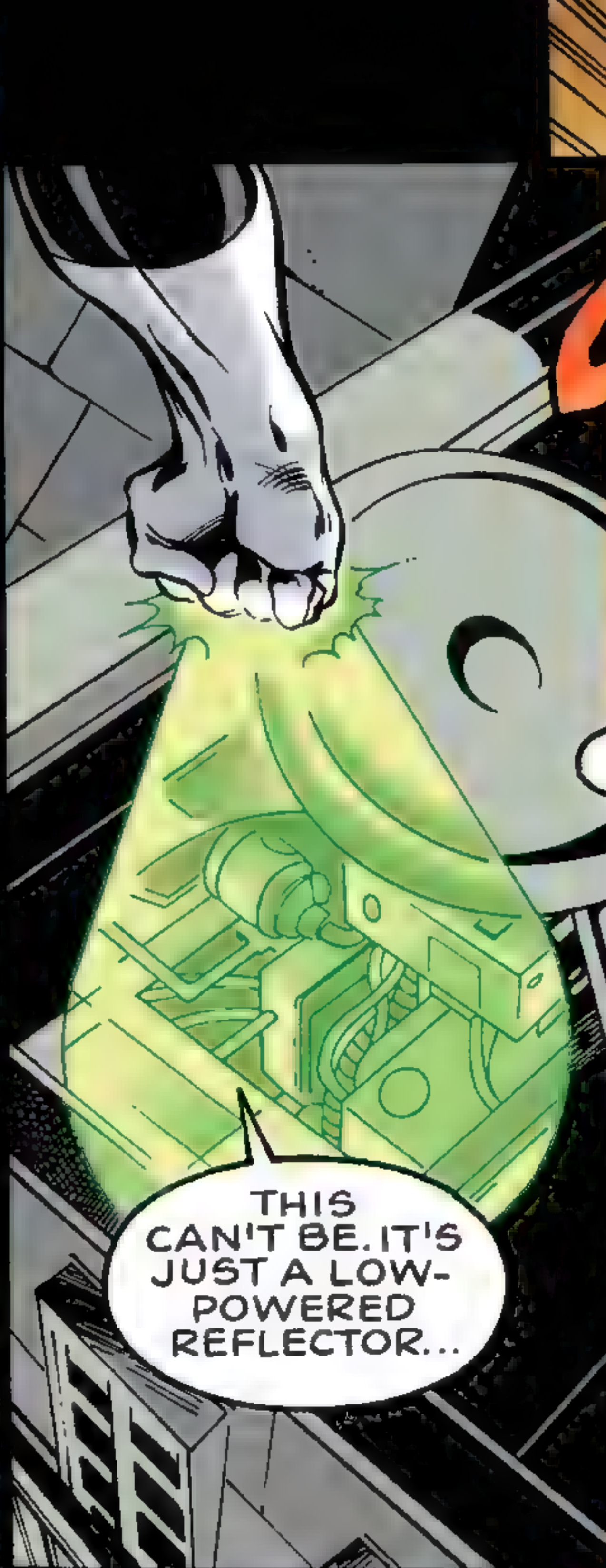
LOOKS LIKE EUROPE...

ALONG A BEAM COMING FROM THE EARTH.



...PARIS, FRANCE.

IT'S COMING FROM A SATELLITE DISH ON THAT ROOFTOP.



THIS CAN'T BE. IT'S JUST A LOW-POWERED REFLECTOR...



...A DECOY.



MUST'VE TRIGGERED A BOOBY-TRAP-- DAZED ME!

BUILDING'S COLLAPSING-- GOTTA ERECT A WALL TO PROTECT THE--



CAN'T FOCUS--

WHOA--

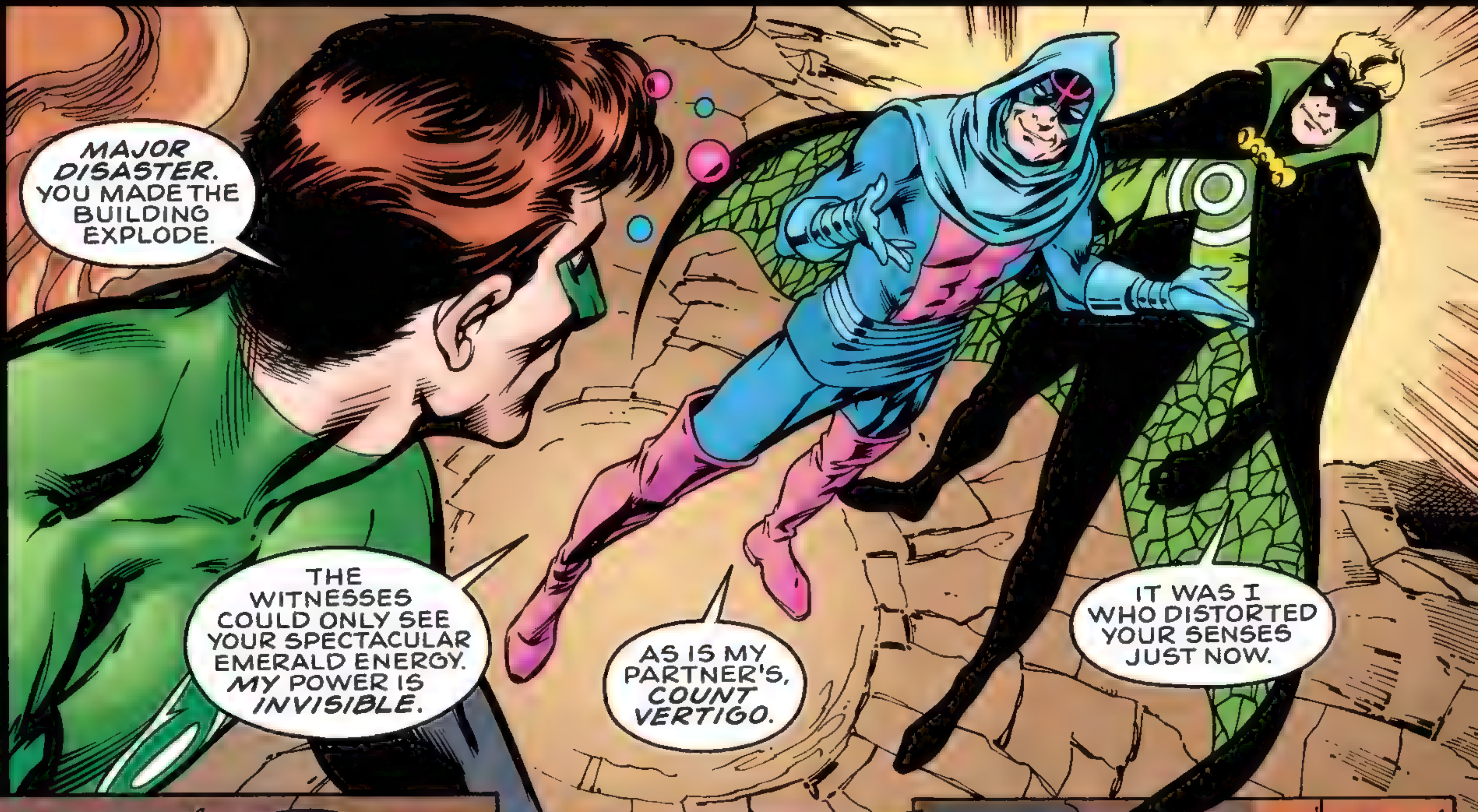


GOTTA PULL BACK BEFORE I CAUSE MORE DAMAGE.



THE GROUND ERUPTING-- I DIDN'T DO THAT!

NO, LANTERN. I DID.



MAJOR
DISASTER.
YOU MADE THE
BUILDING
EXPLODE.

THE
WITNESSES
COULD ONLY SEE
YOUR SPECTACULAR
EMERALD ENERGY.
MY POWER IS
INVISIBLE.

AS IS MY
PARTNER'S,
COUNT
VERTIGO.

IT WAS I
WHO DISTORTED
YOUR SENSES
JUST NOW.



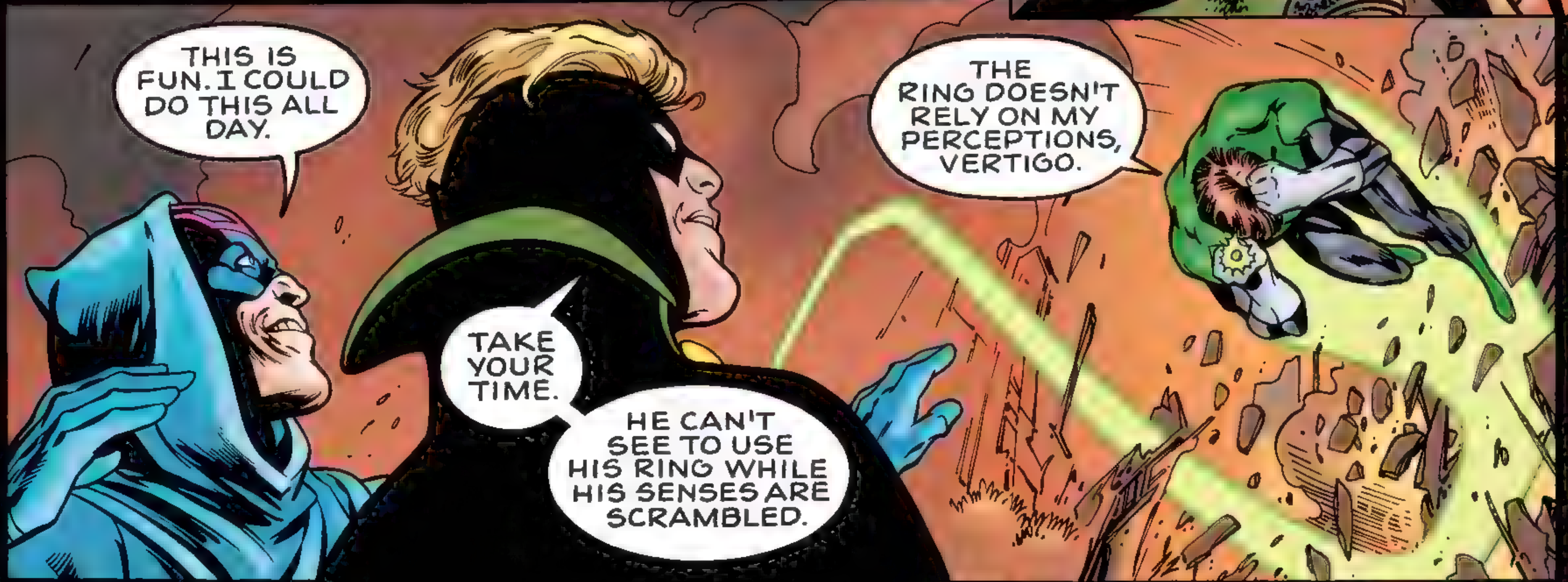
MAYBE
YOU'D LIKE
TO EXPLAIN
THAT TO THE
AUTHOR-
ITIES.

I CAN DO
FAR MORE
THAN MAKE
YOU DIZZY...



...I
CAN TURN
YOUR WORLD
INSIDE
OUT.

YEAH!
THE MORE
HE STRUGGLES,
THE WORSE I
CAN MAKE
IT LOOK.



THIS IS
FUN. I COULD
DO THIS ALL
DAY.

TAKE
YOUR
TIME.

HE CAN'T
SEE TO USE
HIS RING WHILE
HIS SENSES ARE
SCRAMBLED.

THE
RING DOESN'T
RELY ON MY
PERCEPTIONS,
VERTIGO.

MY RING
RESPONDS TO MY
WILLPOWER.

ALL I NEED
TO DO IS CLOSE
MY EYES, IMAGINE
PUNCHING YOU
OUT AND...

...POW!

RRW





THE ARCTIC. CLOSE TO THE NORTH MAGNETIC POLE.

IT IS THE MISSING STAGG INDUSTRY SNOW-MOBILE...

IT WAS TORN APART... BY A SUPER-STRONG MAN. THERE ARE HANDPRINTS IN THE METAL.

THE COLD MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY WHEN.

SIMON STAGG AND HIS HENCHMAN, JAVA, COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED DAYS OR MONTHS AGO.

...WHILE WE'VE BEEN OUT OF RADIO CONTACT.

FELLOW OUTSIDERS!

I FOUND SOMETHING WHILE I WAS OUT SCOUTING. IT REACTED WITH MY FORCE FIELD.

WHAT ABOUT META-MORPHO AND SAPPHIRE?

THEY MAY HAVE RE-SURFACED...

THE CLIFF. IT LOOKED NORMAL UNTIL THE SNOW FELL AWAY AND REVEALED-- THAT.

IT IS SOME SORT OF GIGANTIC DOORWAY.

IT MUST BE RELEVANT TO OUR QUEST. I WILL OPEN IT.

YUP. THIS LOOKS LIKE A JOB FOR GEO-FORCE, THE MAN OF IRON.



I SPOKE IN HASTE. GNUH! I CANNOT... BUDGE IT.

NO, IT'S MOVIN'... C'MON, WE ONLY NEED A GAP TO GET IN. YOU CAN DO IT.

YOU'RE THE STRONGEST MAN ON EARTH.



PERHAPS... THE MAN WHO BUILT IT... IS STRONGER.

EYOWW!! IS THAT THE HINGES SQUEALING?

I HEAR NOTHING...

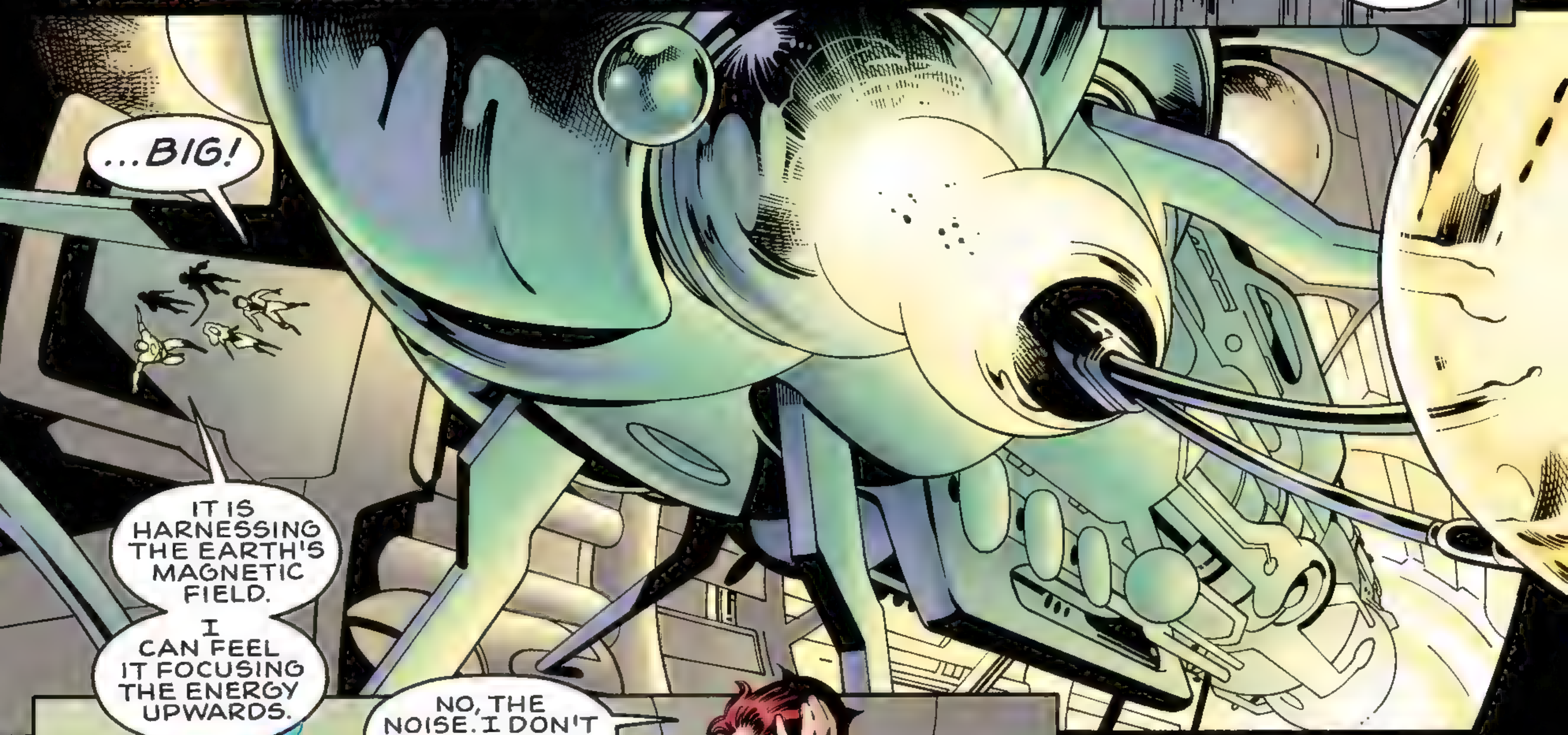


...THE SOUND MUST BE TOO HIGH-PITCHED FOR HUMAN EARS.

IT'S MAKING MY HEAD RING.

THERE IS SOMETHING UP AHEAD.

YEAH, IT'S...



...BIG!

IT IS HARNESSING THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELD.

I CAN FEEL IT FOCUSING THE ENERGY UPWARDS.

NO, THE NOISE. I DON'T THINK IT WAS THE DOOR.

RAC, DO YOU SENSE ANYTHING?



IT KEEPS RINGING IN MY HEAD LIKE...



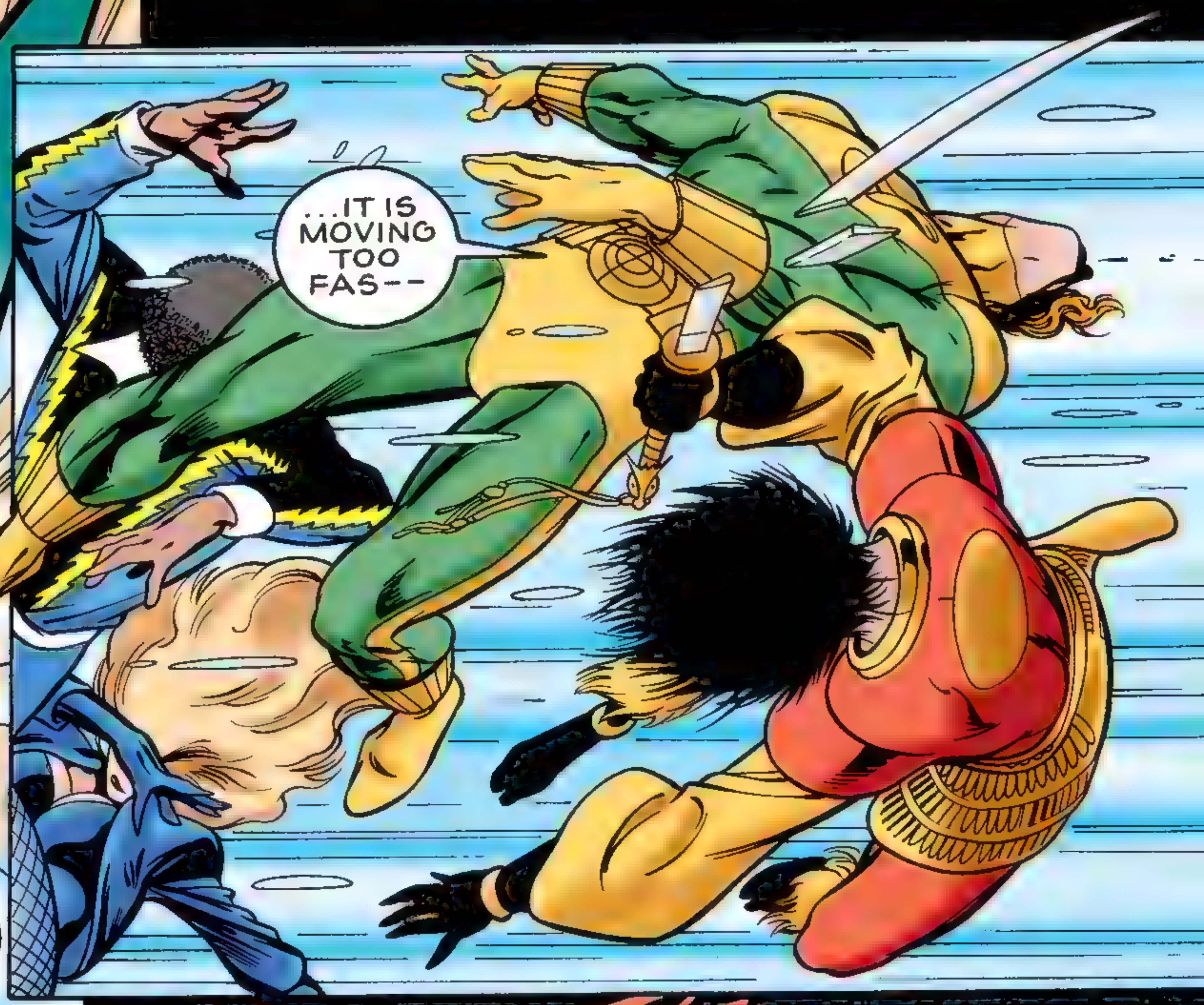
LIKE AN ALARM.

HEADS UP, GANG...



...WE'VE GOT COMPANY.

I CANNOT SEE...



...IT IS MOVING TOO FAS--



AAJEERKK!!

LORD! IT WAS ABLE TO BREACH SHADE'S FORCE-FIELD.

WE'VE GOT TO TAKE IT OUT, JEFF!

CHECK. WE VAPORIZED BRAINIAC WITH OUR COMBO...



...OF MY LIGHTNING...

...AND YOUR HYPER-SONIC SCREAM.



THIS SUCKER DOESN'T STAND A--





THE ALIEN RESEARCH FACILITY NEAR SMALLVILLE, KANSAS.

... YOU'RE ALL GONNA DIE. HA HEH HAHA HA.

THAT'S THE CREEPER.



YES. I SAW HIM IN ACTION ONCE, PROFESSOR HAMILTON. HE SAVED A FAMILY FROM A PSYCHOTIC GUNMAN.

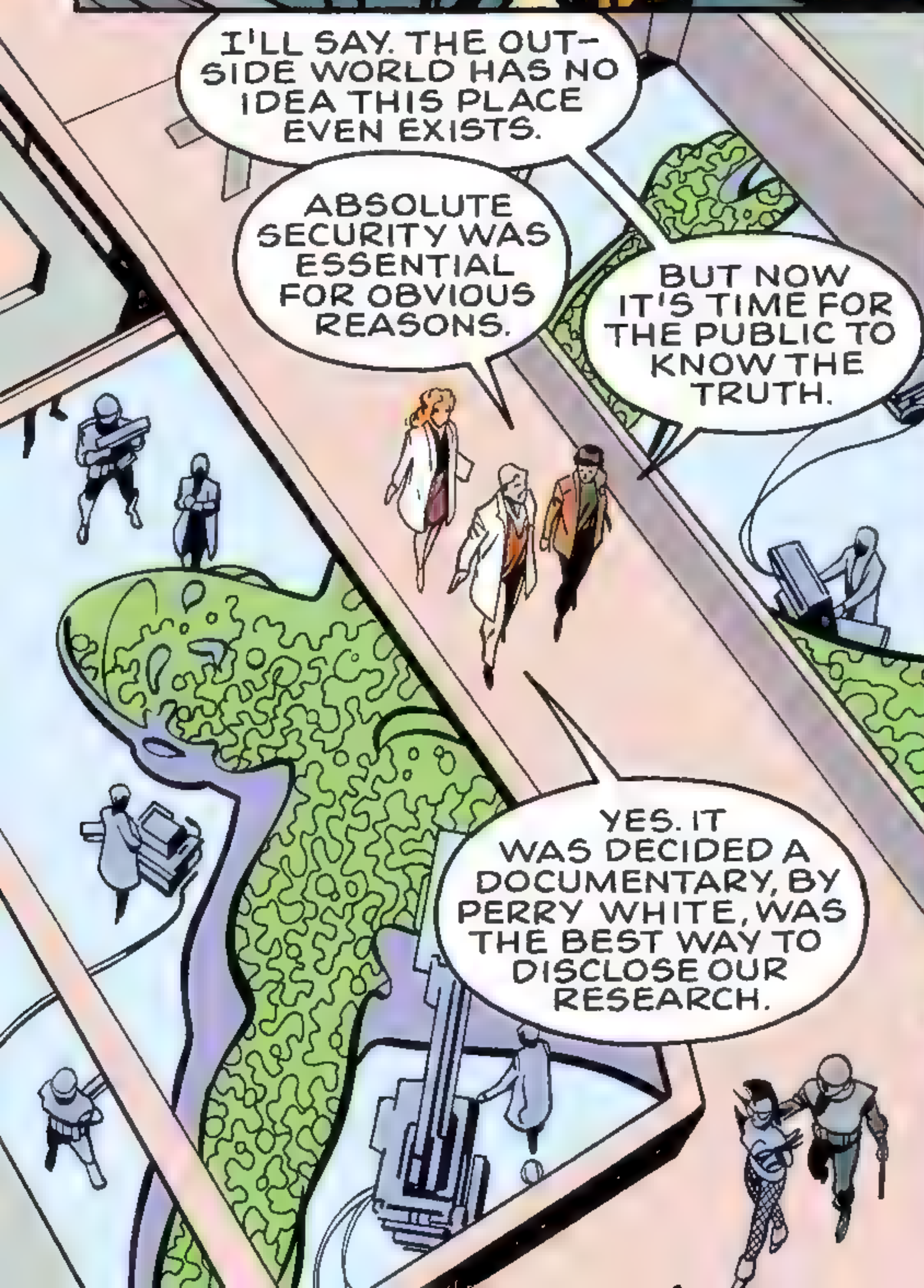
I'M SURE HE WAS VERY CONVINCING, MISS LANE. WE WERE ALL DECEIVED BY THE ALIEN'S CHARADE.



ARE YOU CERTAIN IT IS ALL A CHARADE?

ALL OF OUR SUBJECTS ARE CONVICTED CRIMINALS. MOST ADMIT TO BEING ALIEN INVADERS.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR SUSPICIONS. OUR WORK HERE MUST APPEAR VERY SINISTER.



I'LL SAY. THE OUTSIDE WORLD HAS NO IDEA THIS PLACE EVEN EXISTS.

ABSOLUTE SECURITY WAS ESSENTIAL FOR OBVIOUS REASONS.

BUT NOW IT'S TIME FOR THE PUBLIC TO KNOW THE TRUTH.

YES. IT WAS DECIDED A DOCUMENTARY, BY PERRY WHITE, WAS THE BEST WAY TO DISCLOSE OUR RESEARCH.



HARD FACTS TO COUNTER THE ALIEN'S LIES...

... REPORTED BY SOMEONE THE PUBLIC TRUSTS.

PERRY WAS A BELIEVER.

TO BE BLUNT--

THIS FRIGHTENS ME.



OUR RESEARCH IS *HUMANE*. WE'RE NOT MAD SCIENTISTS.

AND THIS FACILITY IS NOT A PRISON CAMP.

WE ARE AT WAR. AND THIS IS THE *ONLY* WAY TO ACCURATELY GAUGE THE ALIEN THREAT.

THE PEOPLE MUST KNOW THAT, BEFORE THE CLIMATE OF FEAR AND SUSPICION ERUPTS INTO PUBLIC DISORDER.



MAYOR LUTHOR'S OFFICE RECOMMENDED YOU.

YEAH. JIMMY'S A SWEET GUY. BUT YOU DON'T NEED ME. ANY FILM CREW COULD DO THE JOB.

YOU HAVE AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION. IMPORTANT PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD TRUST YOU.

WILL YOU AT LEAST THINK ABOUT IT?

OKAY.



DON'T TAKE TOO LONG. TIME IS RUNNING OUT.

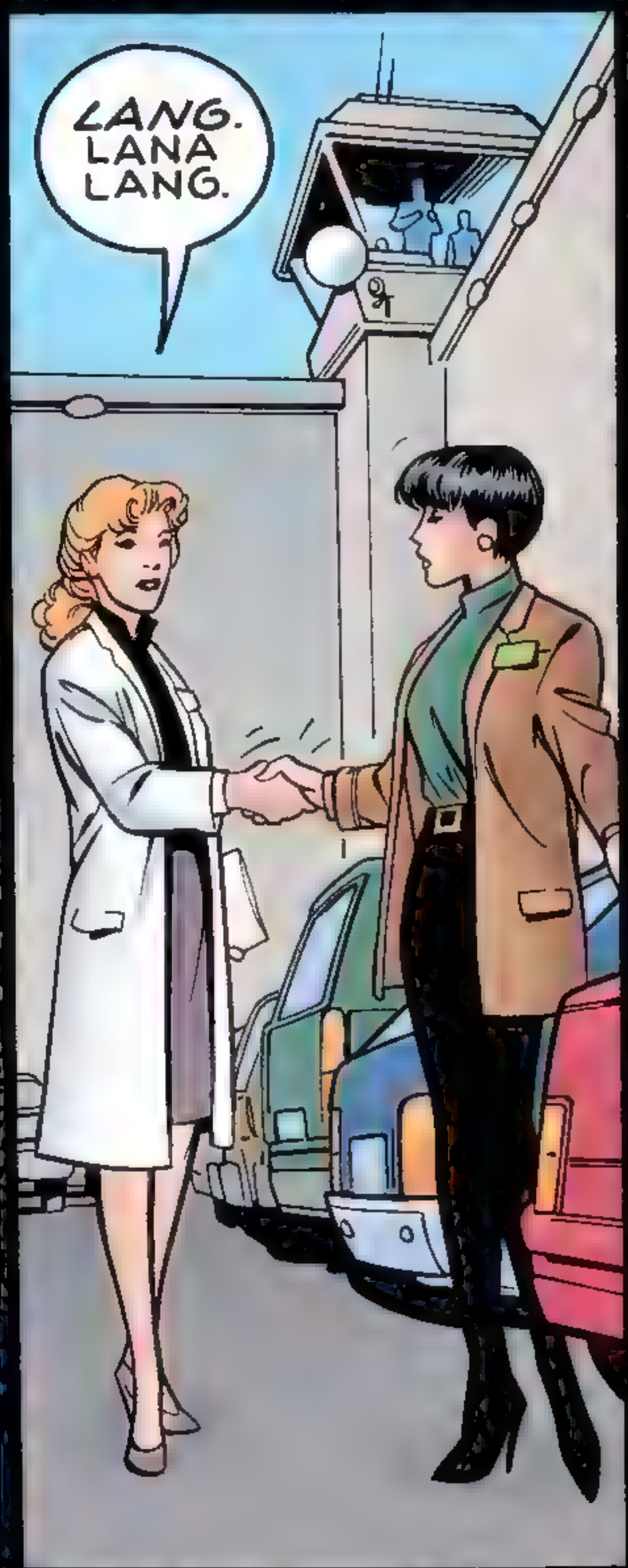
I UNDERSTAND. THANK YOU, PROFESSOR.



DO YOU BELIEVE THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW THE TRUTH, MISS LANE?

THE *WHOLE* TRUTH. YES.

THANK YOU FOR THE TOUR... DOCTOR?



LANG. LANA LANG.



GOODBYE.

YEAH... 'BYE?



Kents Farm
Organic for health
THE TRUTH
Proprietors
Jonathan and Martha Kent

THE LEXCORP
TOWER,
METROPOLIS.

LEXCORP'S
PHENOMENAL SUCCESS
IS DUE ENTIRELY TO LEX
LUTHOR'S SCIENTIFIC
GENIUS.

HIS
TECHNICAL
INNOVATION IS
DECADES AHEAD
OF THE COM-
PETITION.

I KNOW, MR
SILVER. THAT IS
WHY I WANT TO
WORK HERE.
TO LEARN.

AND I REALLY
DO APPRECIATE
YOUR SHOWING ME
AROUND. I KNOW
YOU ARE BENDING
REGULATIONS.

A FORMALITY.
YOUR QUALIFICATIONS
FOR THE POSITION
ARE MORE THAN
AMPLE.

I MEAN,
YOU HAVE AN
IMPRESSIONING
RESUME.

AND,
PLEASE,
CALL ME
JOE.

HOW IS
MAYOR LUTHOR
AFTER THE
ASSASSINATION
ATTEMPT,
JOE?

IT WAS
JUST A MILD
CONCUSSION. HE'S
OUT OF THE
HOSPITAL.

IS HE
HERE?

I DOUBT IT. HE
RARELY MAKES AN
APPEARANCE.

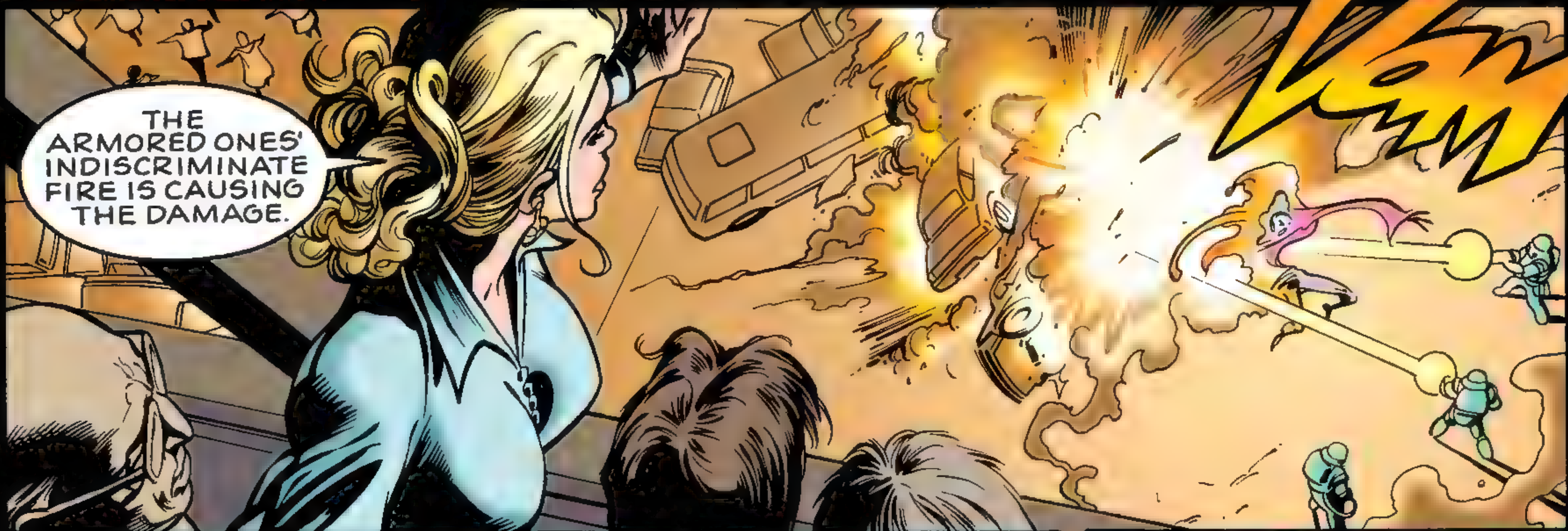
THE
BUSINESS IS
RUN BY THE
EXECS IN THE
PENTHOUSE.

THEY
ALWAYS ARRIVE
AND LEAVE BY THE
HELIPORT.

LOOK.
THERE IS
SOME SORT OF
COMMOTION
OUTSIDE.

IT'S
METAMORPHO.

HE'S
RUNNING
AMOK.



THE ARMORED ONES' INDISCRIMINATE FIRE IS CAUSING THE DAMAGE.



SHUSSH, JOAN. YOU'RE NOT MEANT TO BE HERE.

JUST WATCH. MAYBE WE'LL SEE THEM WASTE THE FREAK.

WHY?



YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY. THE ONLY GOOD ALIEN IS --

A DEAD ALIEN?

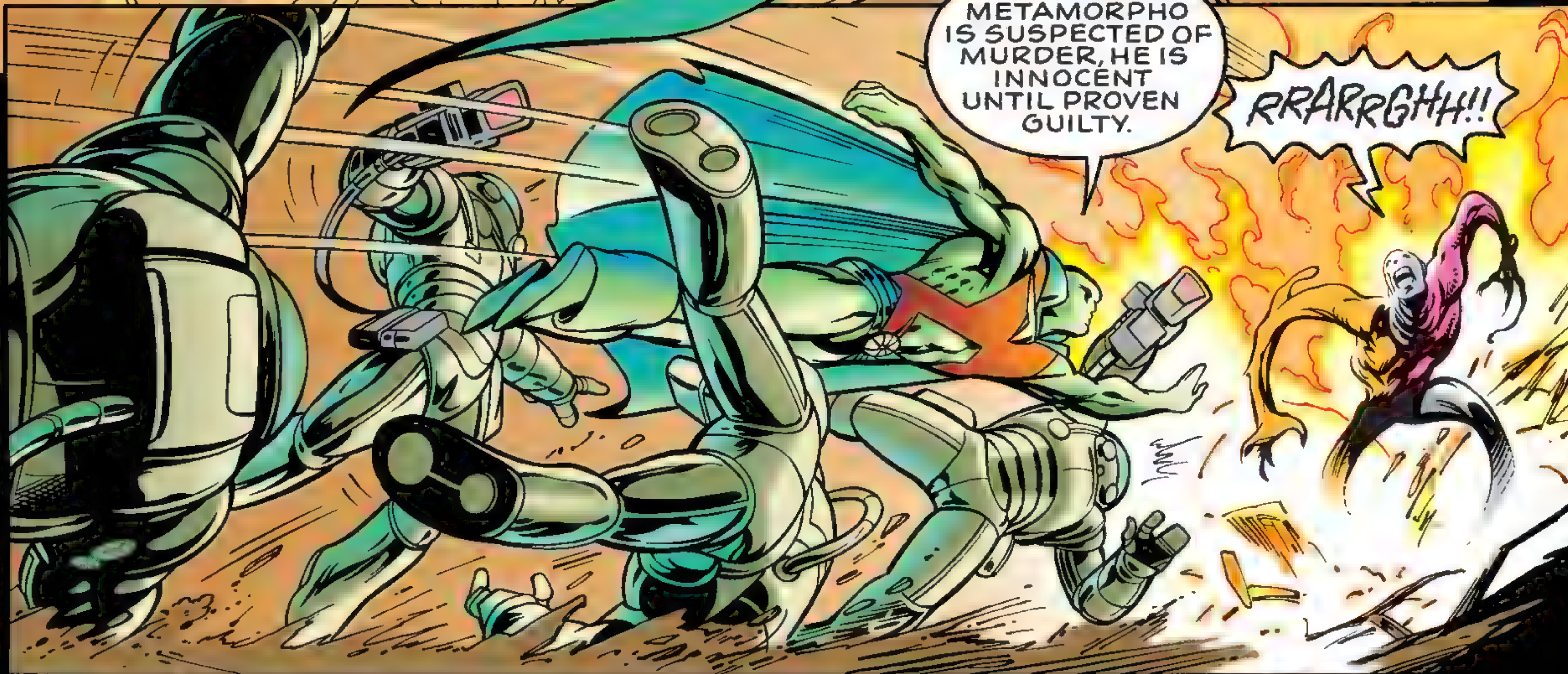


I DO NOT AGREE WITH THAT PHILOSOPHY...

...ALIEN!



YOUR IRRATIONAL FEAR OF THAT WHICH IS DIFFERENT MAKES YOU FORGET YOUR OWN LAWS.



THOUGH METAMORPHO IS SUSPECTED OF MURDER, HE IS INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY.

RRARRGH!!



REX!
STOP!

I CAN'T...

THEIR
WEAPONS...
DESTABILIZED
ME...

WHAT?

I'M DIS-
INTEGRATING--

OH LORD!

MY LEGS...



J'ONN...
LISTEN...

THEY
MADE ME DO
IT, J'ONN.

MADE
ME KILL...
USED SAPPHIRE
AS HOSTAGE...
TRAPPED ME...
DID SOMETHING
TO MY MIND--

MADE
ME KILL--
TRIED NOT
TO...

...TRIED...
UNTIL...BROKE
FREE...



...SO THEY
KILLED ME...

STAND
UP, GREENIE.
YOU'RE UNDER
ARREST.



H'RONMEER
QPVAAIL!



YOU
DISGUST ME,
YOU MURDERING
FOOL.

I CALLED
REX MASON
FRIEND. HE WAS
A GOOD MAN. HIS
POWER WAS NOT
A GIFT -- BUT
A CURSE.

YET STILL
HE DEVOTED HIS
LIFE TO HELPING
HUMANKIND.



BUT NO.
YOU WOULDN'T
UNDERSTAND.

ALL YOU
UNDERSTAND IS
VIOLENCE. I AM
WASTING MY
BREATH...



... YOU ARE
MERELY A
PUPPET...



... I SHOULD
BE TALKING
TO YOUR
MASTER.



THE
TIME FOR
CAUTION IS
PAST.

I
WILL HAVE
ANSWERS.

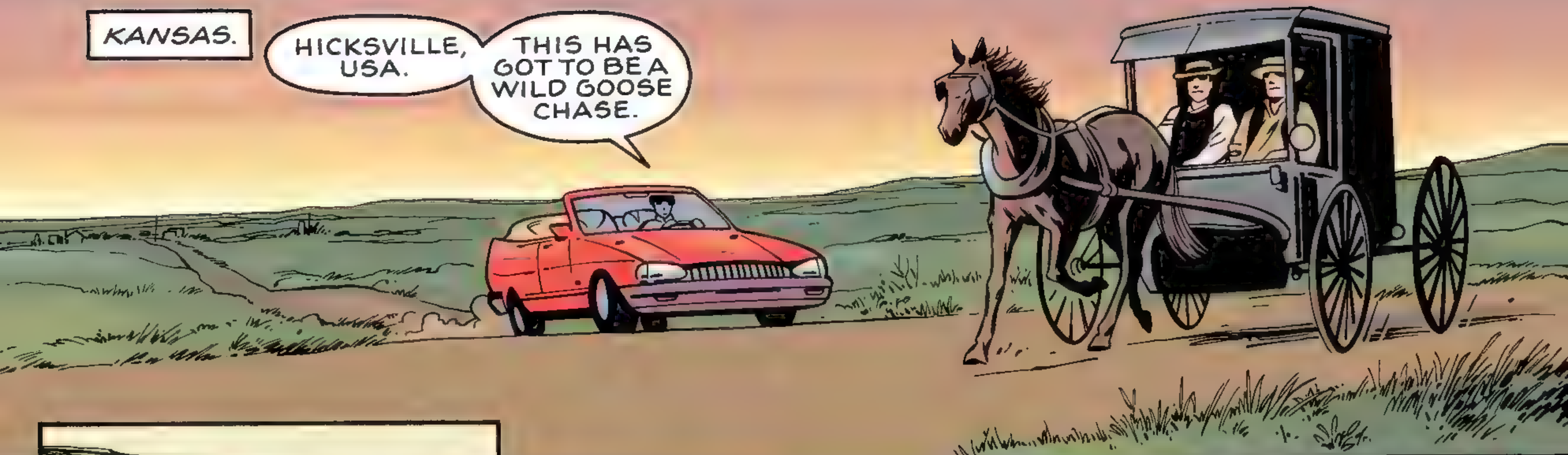


SKASH

KANSAS.

HICKSVILLE,
USA.

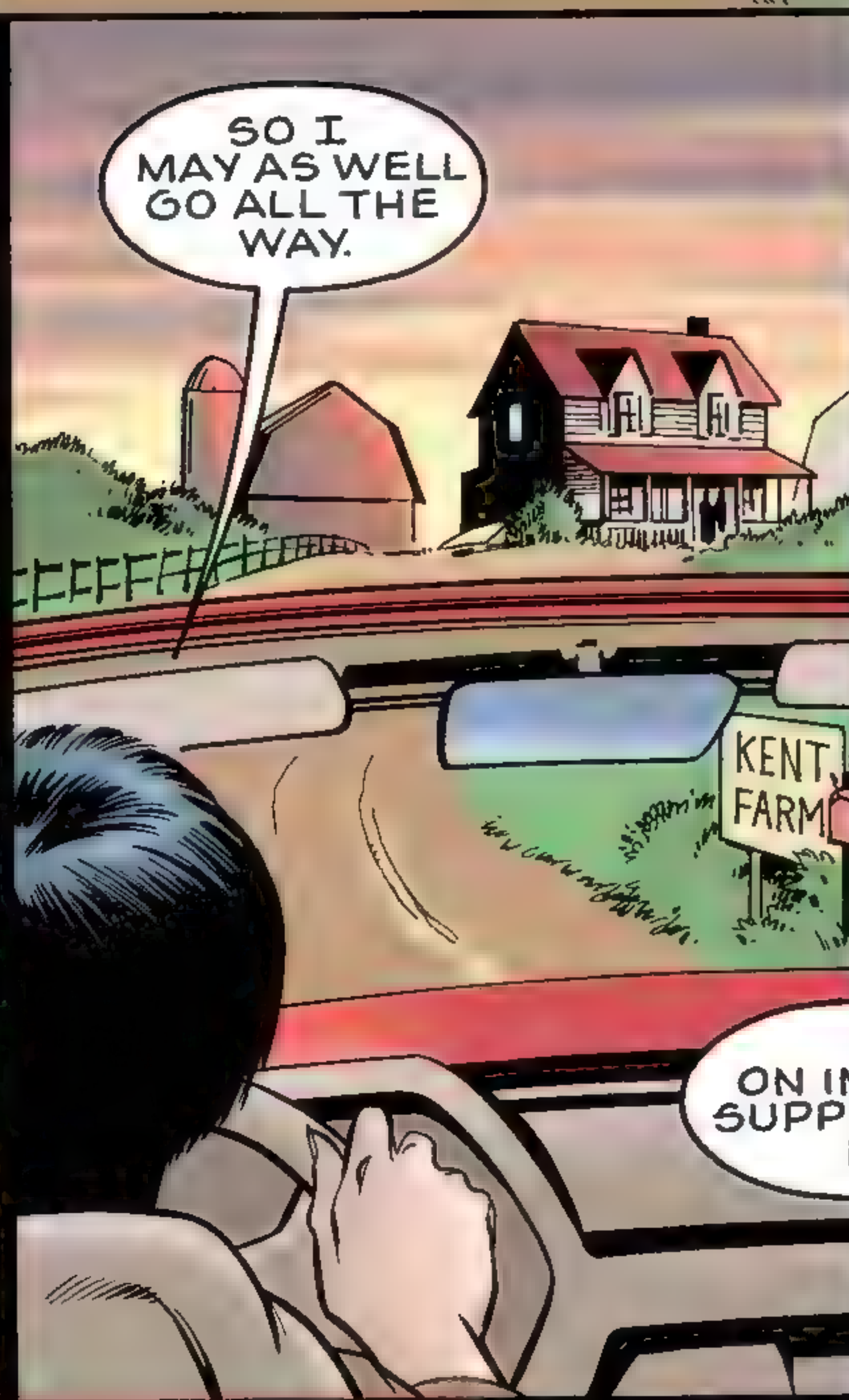
THIS HAS
GOT TO BE A
WILD GOOSE
CHASE.



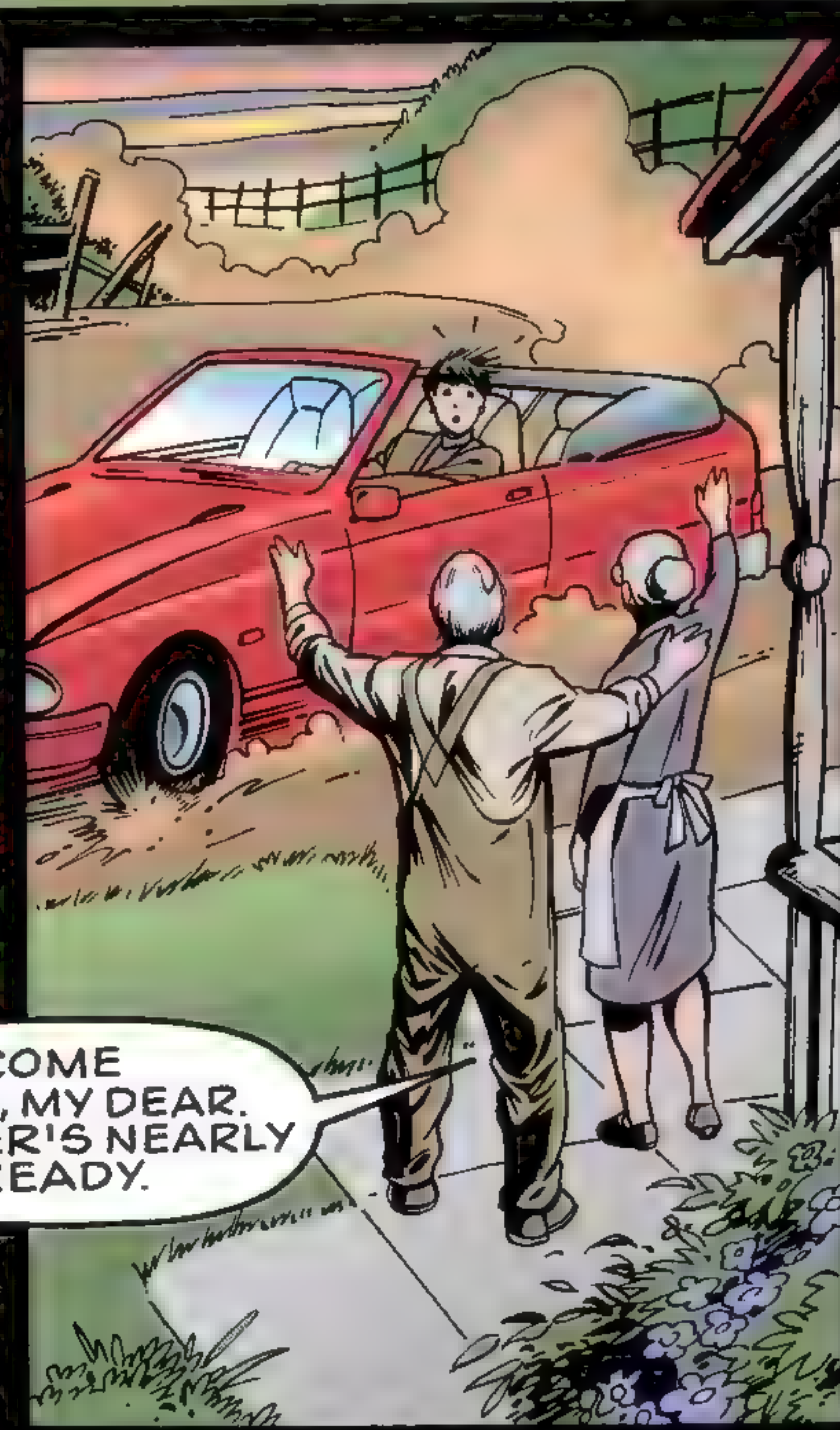
BUT I'VE
COME THIS
FAR.



SO I
MAY AS WELL
GO ALL THE
WAY.



COME
ON IN, MY DEAR.
SUPPER'S NEARLY
READY.

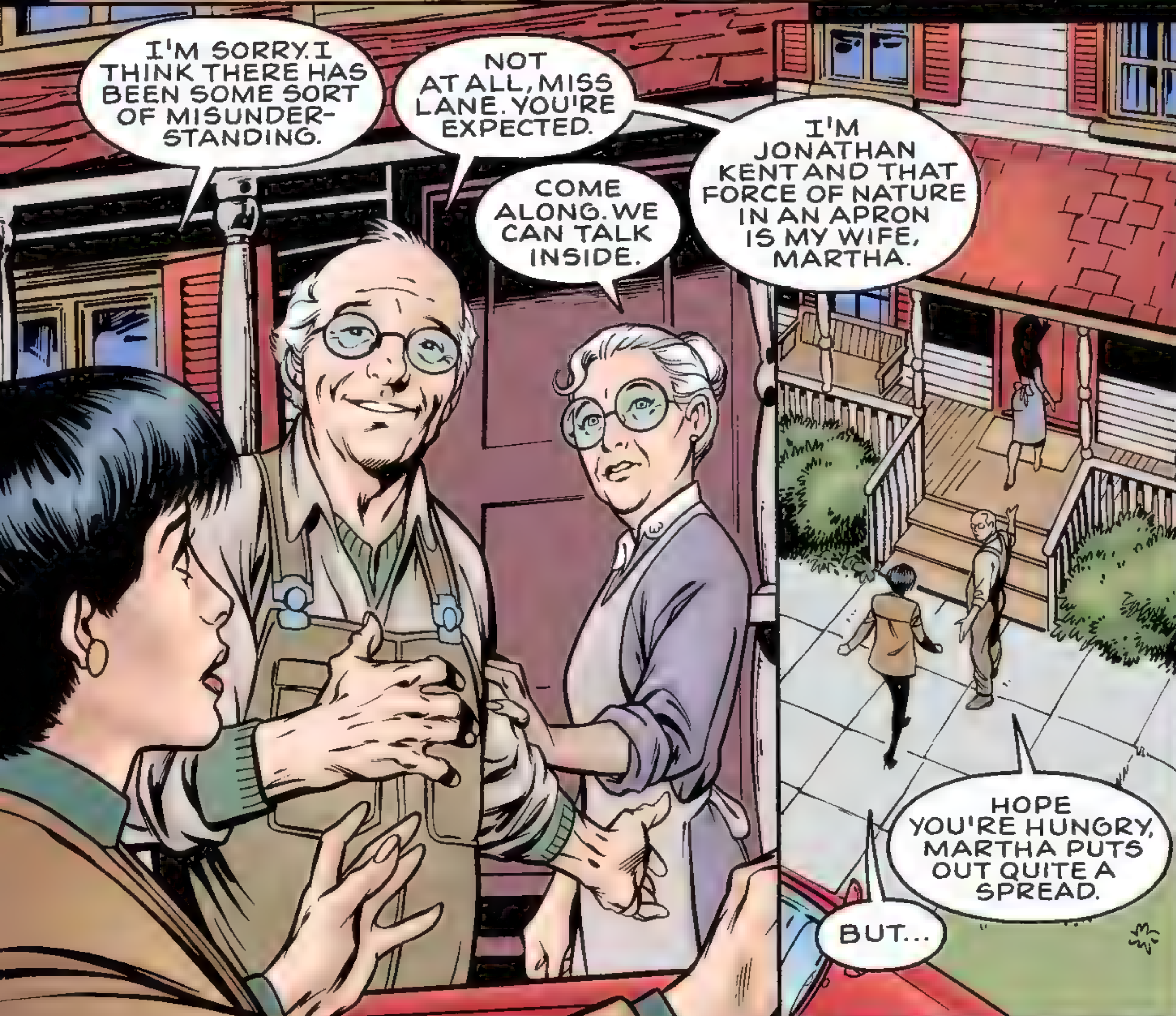


I'M SORRY. I
THINK THERE HAS
BEEN SOME SORT
OF MISUNDER-
STANDING.

NOT
AT ALL, MISS
LANE. YOU'RE
EXPECTED.

COME
ALONG. WE
CAN TALK
INSIDE.

I'M
JONATHAN
KENT AND THAT
FORCE OF NATURE
IN AN APRON
IS MY WIFE,
MARTHA.



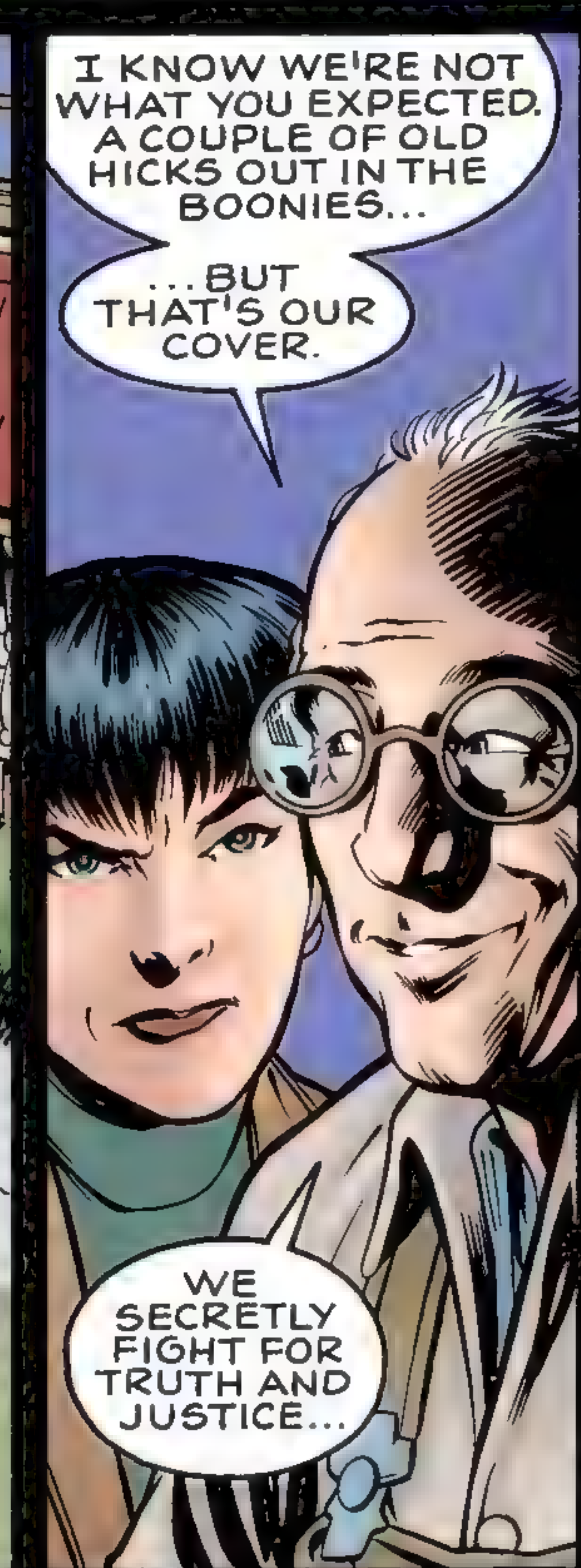
I KNOW WE'RE NOT
WHAT YOU EXPECTED.
A COUPLE OF OLD
HICKS OUT IN THE
BOONIES...

...BUT
THAT'S OUR
COVER.

HOPE
YOU'RE HUNGRY,
MARTHA PUTS
OUT QUITE A
SPREAD.

BUT...

WE
SECRETLY
FIGHT FOR
TRUTH AND
JUSTICE...





... BY HELPING
RESCUE METAHUMANS
FROM THAT ALIEN RE-
SEARCH FACILITY.

THANK YOU,
BOYS. I WAS
JUST COMING
IN TO DO
THAT.

ULTRA
SUGGESTED
WE SERVE IT
UP WHILE THERE
WAS STILL
SOME FOOD
LEFT.

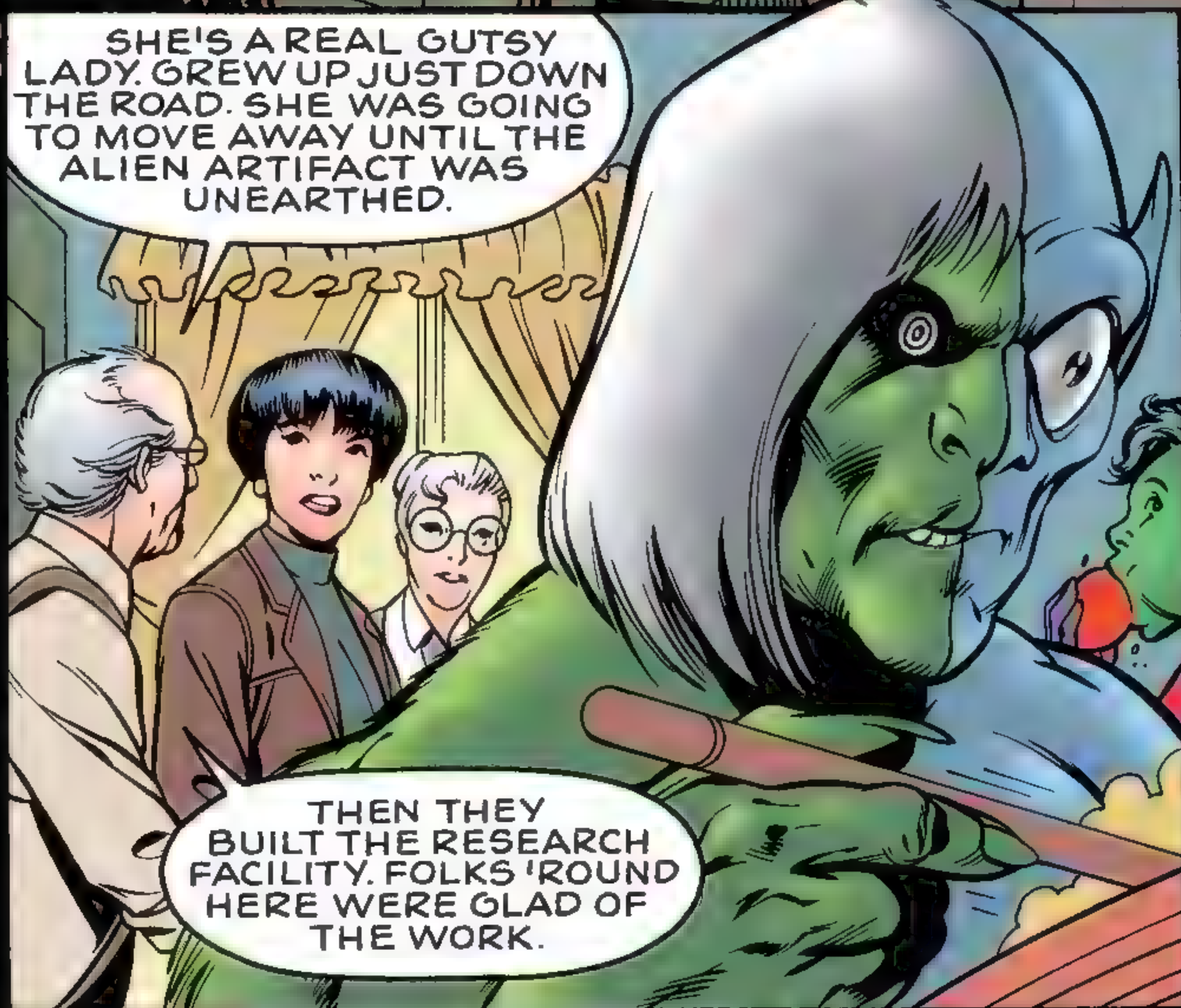
BEAST BOY!!



WHEN
LANA TOLD US
WHAT WAS GOING
ON WE FIGURED
WE HAD TO DO
SOMETHING
TO HELP.

THAT'S
LANA LANG,
SHE SENT YOU
HERE.

RIIIGHT.



SHE'S A REAL GUTSY
LADY. GREW UP JUST DOWN
THE ROAD. SHE WAS GOING
TO MOVE AWAY UNTIL THE
ALIEN ARTIFACT WAS
UNEARTHED.

THEN THEY
BUILT THE RESEARCH
FACILITY. FOLKS 'ROUND
HERE WERE GLAD OF
THE WORK.



BUT
WHEN THEY
STARTED EX-
PERIMENTING
ON FOLK...

... WELL, IT'S
INHUMAN!

AND THEN
THERE ARE
THOSE OTHER
THINGS.

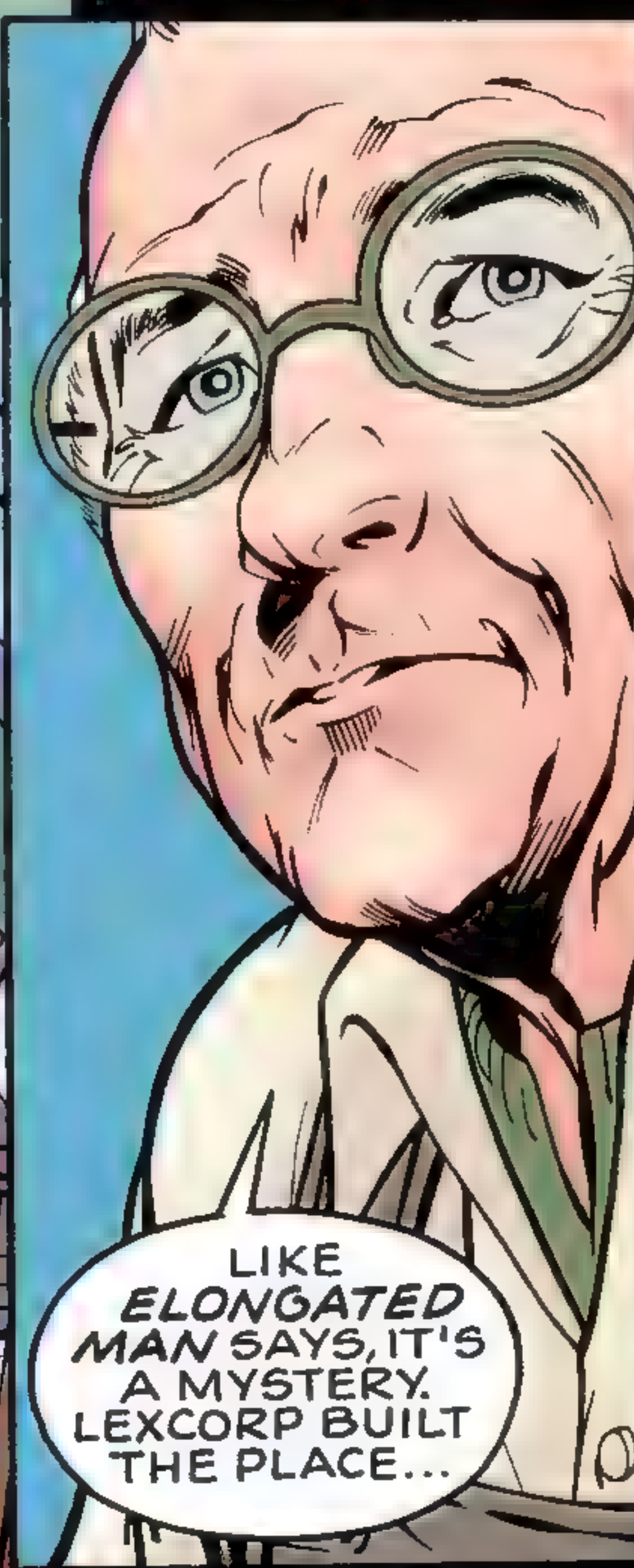
THE
CREATURES
THEY'RE
GROWING.



CREATURES?
I DIDN'T SEE
ANYTHING LIKE
THAT.

'COURSE NOT.
NO ONE DOES.
NOT EVEN THE
GOVERNMENT
INSPECTION
TEAMS.

THEN
WHO IS
BEHIND
IT?

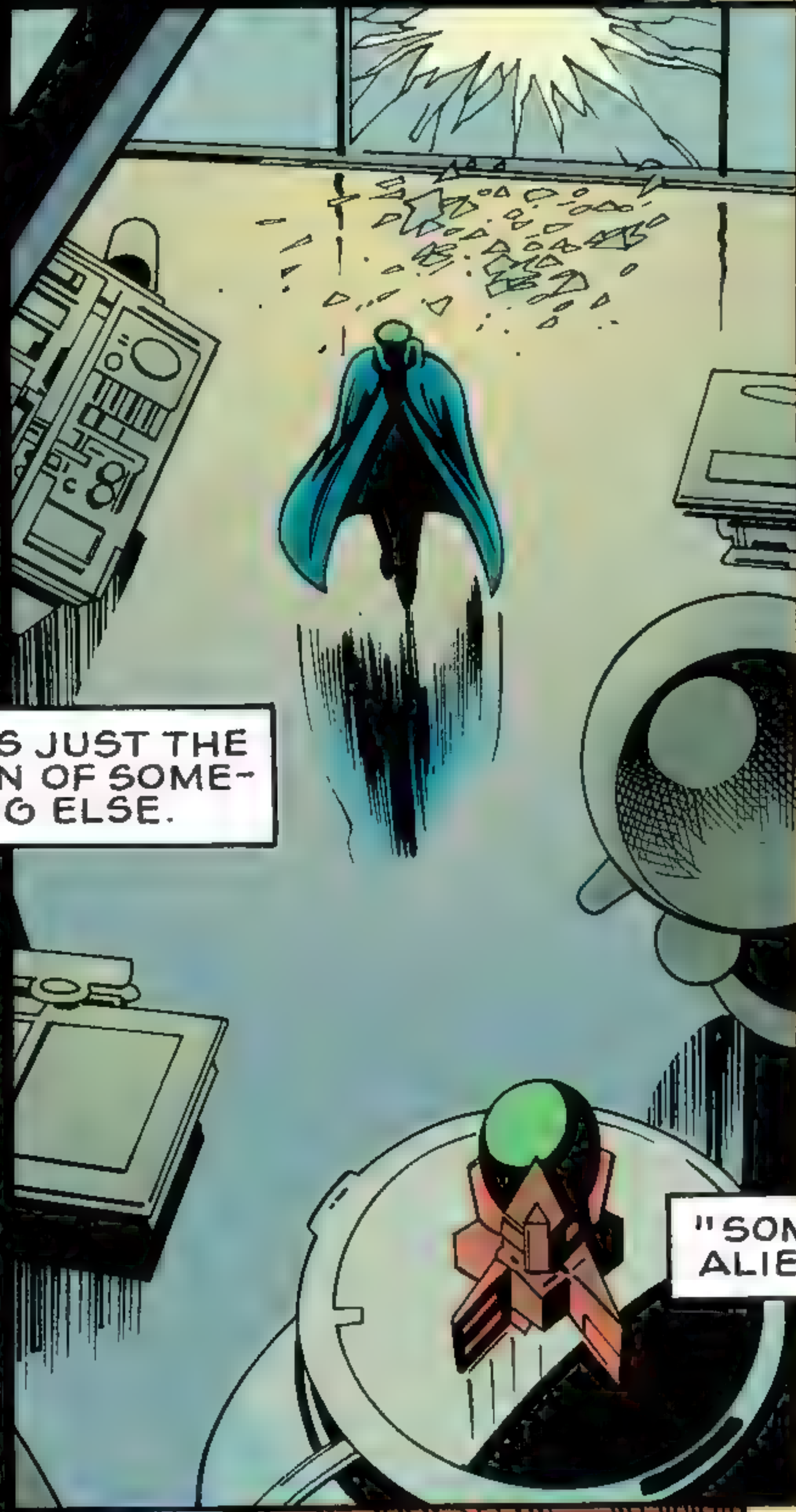


LIKE
ELONGATED
MAN SAYS, IT'S
A MYSTERY.
LEXCORP BUILT
THE PLACE...



"...BUT LEX LUTHOR ISN'T IN CONTROL."

"HE'S JUST THE PAWN OF SOMETHING ELSE."



"SOMETHING ALIEN."



KKRRRAAAA!!

THE SECRET SANCTUM OF
EARTH'S MOST POWERFUL
SORCERER, DOCTOR FATE.
SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS.

THE ECHOES
OF FUTURE
CATASTROPHE
INTENSIFY...

...YET
STILL THE
SOURCE ELUDES
MY PSYCHIC
PROBE.

I
MUST ALERT
THE OTHER
GUARDIANS
OF ORDER.

I
ALREADY
KNOW.

OF
COURSE. I
SHOULD HAVE
REALIZED YOU
WOULD KNOW,
**PHANTOM
STRANGER.**

Aye, but
he who walks
'twixt Heaven
and Hell...

...is
cursed to
know all but
never to
tell.

I AM A
HUMBLE
GUIDE,
**DEMON
ETRIGAN.**

Or
can it
be? Thou
art blind
as we?

YEAH.
WELL, I
KNOW
WHAT'S
GOIN'
ON.

How can the
lowly ghost,
Deadman...

...claim to
see more than
we mystics
can?

BECAUSE I
DON'T HAVE MY
HEAD STUCK IN
THE ETHEREAL
REALMS.

I HANG
OUT IN THE
REAL WORLD--
AND I'VE SEEN
THINGS.

FOLKS
WITH BRAIN
CONTROL
DEVICES...

...AND WEIRD
EXPERIMENTS
-- REAL SICK
STUFF...

...IT'S
ALL PART
OF AN ALIEN
TAKEOVER.

WE
GOTTA
STOP
THEM!

NO!

THE
SPECTRE!
HE'S PULLIN' US
ONTO THE ASTRAL
PLANE...

IT MUST
BE SERIOUS
IF HE'S GONNA
HELP US.

ON THE
CONTRARY, SPIRIT
OF BOSTON BRAND,
I INTERVENE TO
STOP YOU.

What
particular of
this circumstance
prompts such a
decree...

... from thou
who has ever
fought to keep
Adam's children
free?

WE EXIST
TO PROTECT THE
MORTAL PLANE FROM
THE EVIL IN REALMS
BEYOND.

ALL MORTAL
LIFE, EVEN THAT
WHICH ORIGINATES
LIGHT-YEARS FROM
EARTH, IS PART OF
THE NATURAL
ORDER.

RAMA
KUSHNA
ASSIGNED
ME TO EARTH
TO COMBAT
EVIL...

... AND THE
WAY I SEE IT, BUG-
EYED ALIEN MONSTERS
ARE JUST AS EVIL AS
ANY FREAKIN'
DEMON.

YOUR OPINION
IS IRRELEVANT.

YEAH, WELL
I AIN'T GONNA
STAND BY WHILE
MANKIND GETS
EXTERMINATED.

I WILL NOT
PERMIT YOU TO
INTERFERE.

HUMANITY
MUST WIN ITS
OWN PLACE IN
THE UNIVERSE.

HOW CAN YOU BE SO CALLOUS,
Y'BIG SPOOK? PART OF YOU
USED T'BE HUMAN TOO.

THE
SPECTRE
IS CORRECT,
DEADMAN.

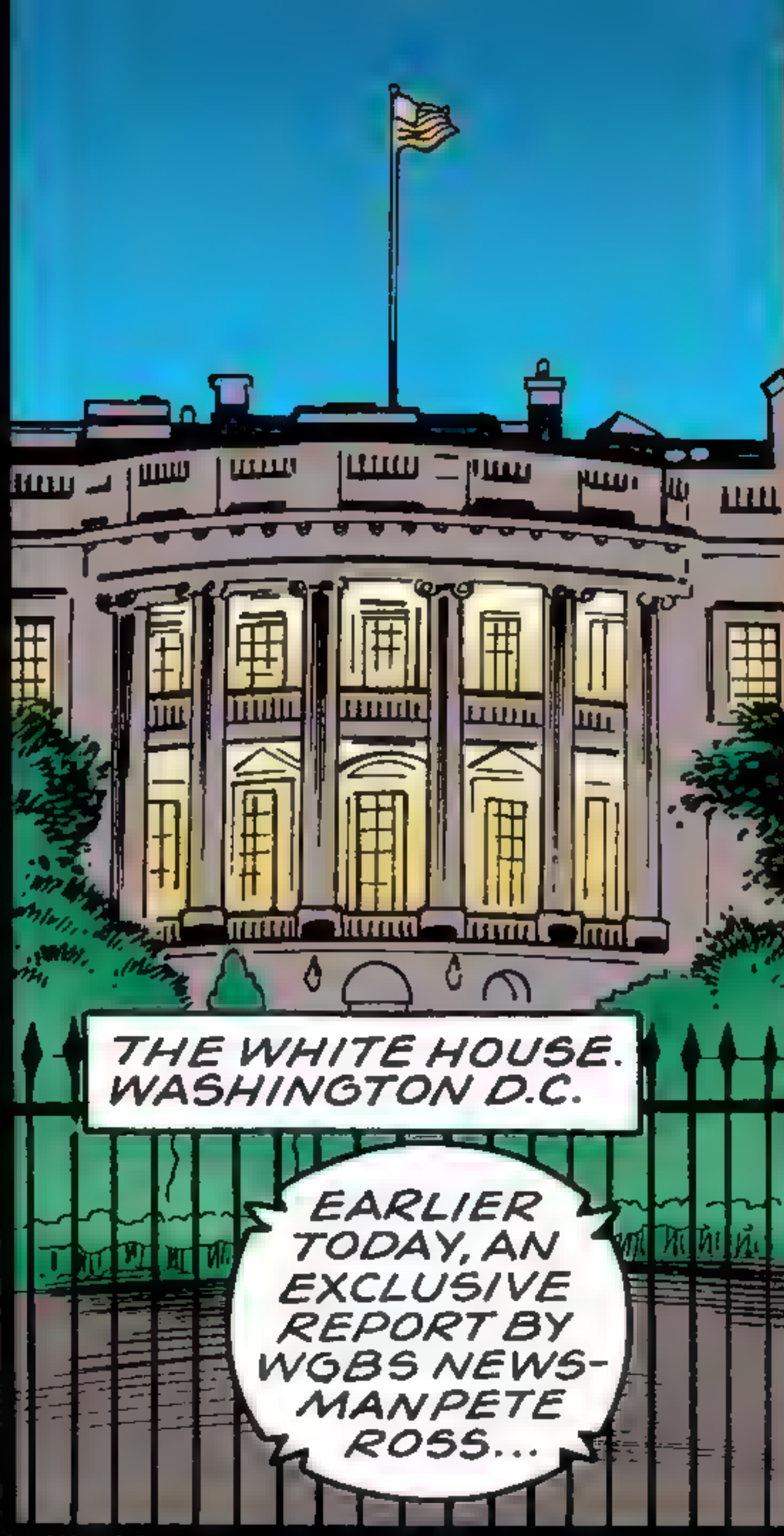
HUMANITY HAS
GROWN THROUGH
ADVERSITY.

AND
CONFLICT WITH NON-
TERRESTRIALS WAS
INEVITABLE...

... MANKIND HAS ALWAYS
BEEN DESTINED TO
SPREAD OUT AMONGST
THE STARS.

IF!

IF THEY
SURVIVE.



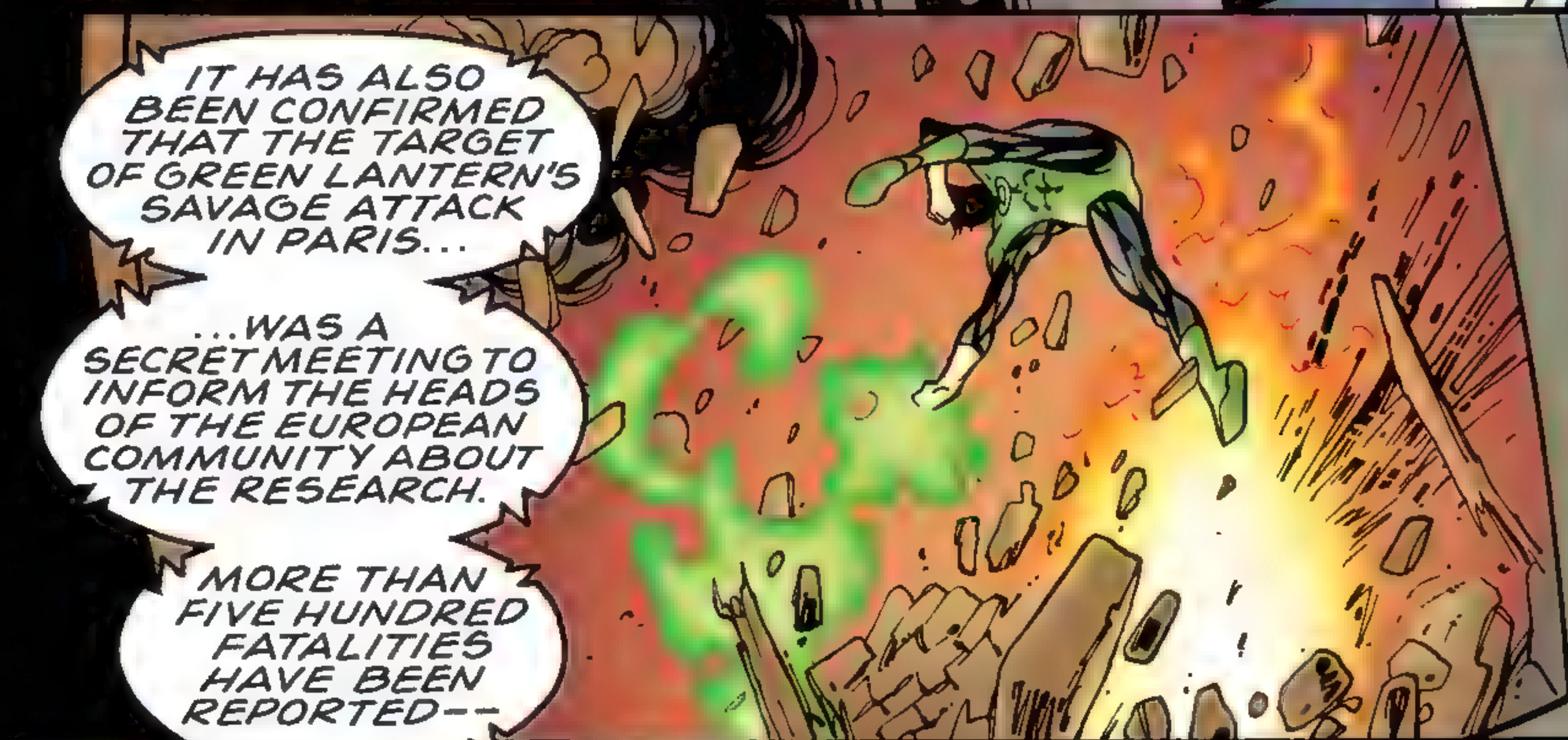
THE WHITE HOUSE.
WASHINGTON D.C.

EARLIER
TODAY, AN
EXCLUSIVE
REPORT BY
WGBS NEWS-
MAN PETE
ROSS...



... REVEALED
THE EXISTENCE OF
THE GOVERNMENT'S
ALIEN RESEARCH
FACILITY.

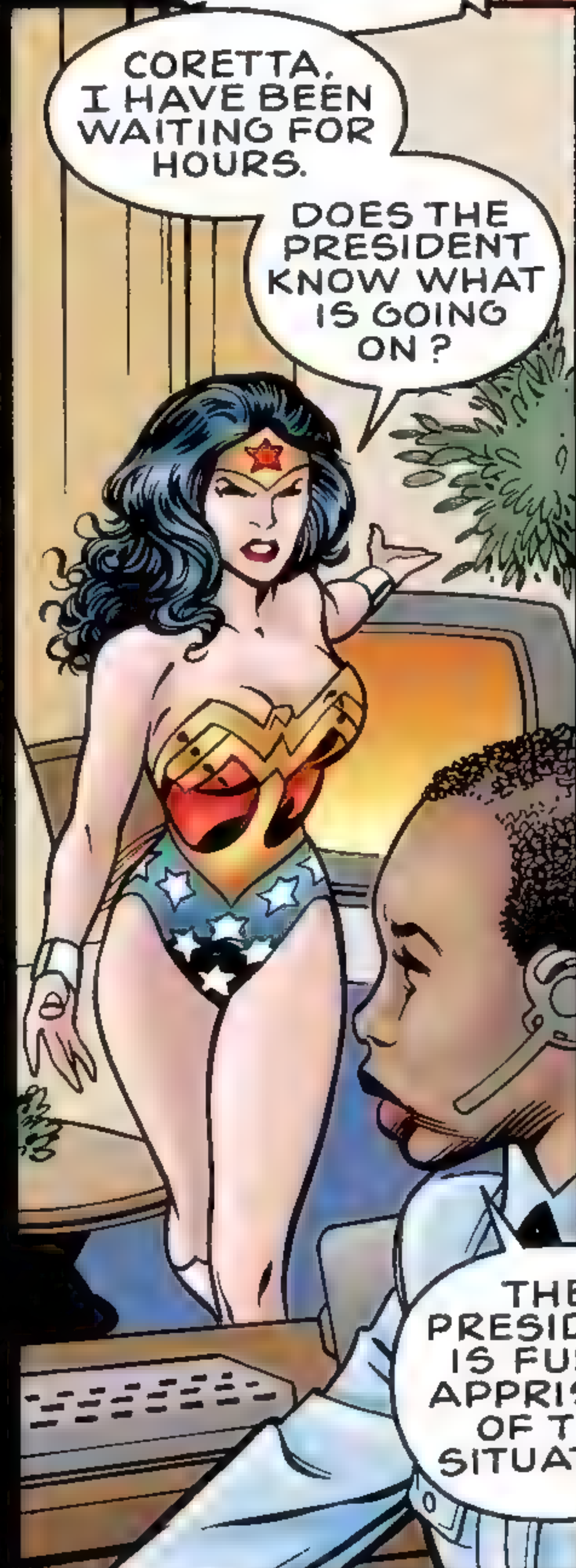
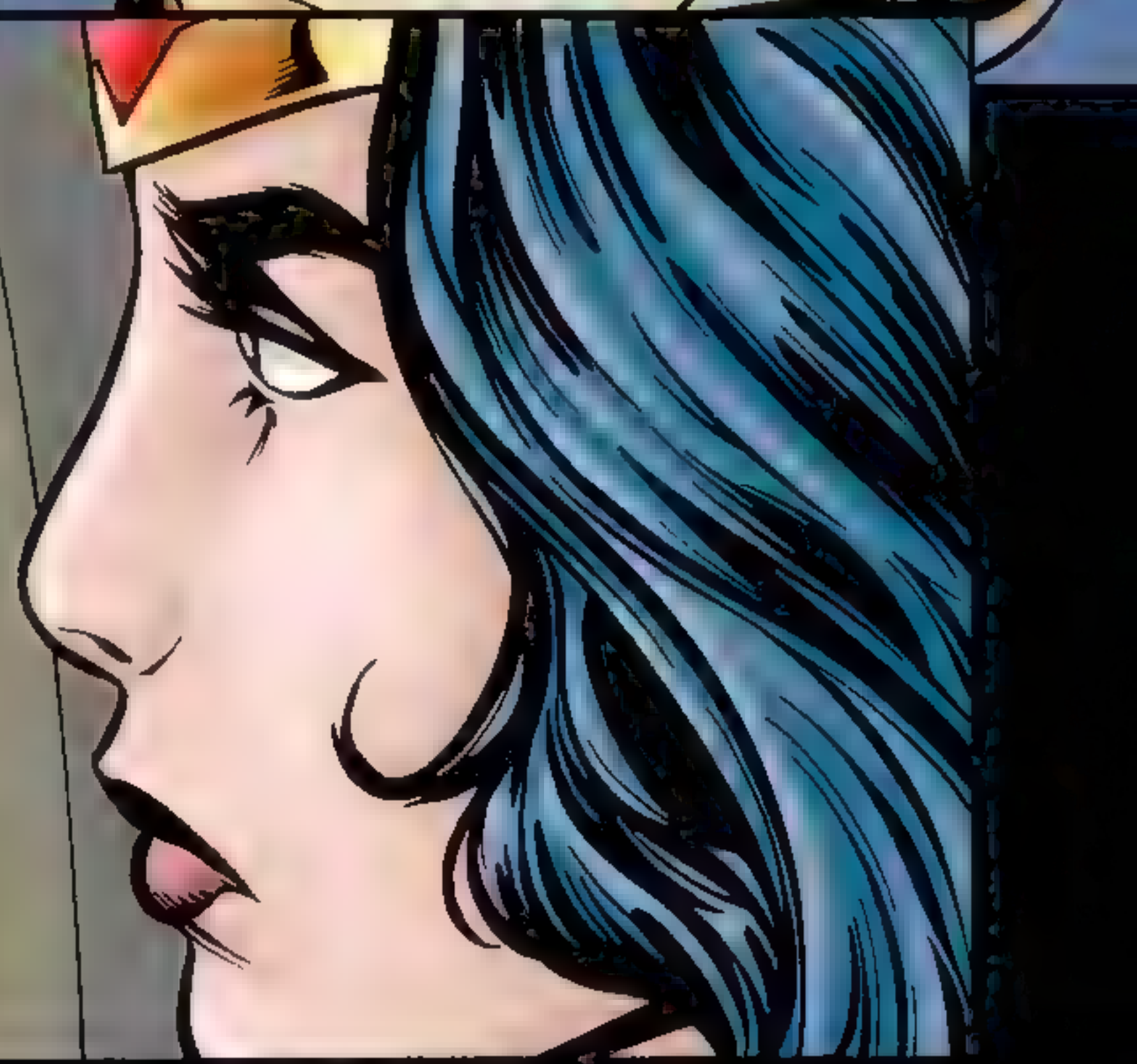
WORLD
LEADERS HAVE
APPLAUDED AMERICA'S
INITIATIVE IN ATTEMPTING
TO FIND A SOLUTION TO
THE METAHUMAN
MENACE.



IT HAS ALSO
BEEN CONFIRMED
THAT THE TARGET
OF GREEN LANTERN'S
SAVAGE ATTACK
IN PARIS...

... WAS A
SECRET MEETING TO
INFORM THE HEADS
OF THE EUROPEAN
COMMUNITY ABOUT
THE RESEARCH.

MORE THAN
FIVE HUNDRED
FATALITIES
HAVE BEEN
REPORTED--



CORETTA,
I HAVE BEEN
WAITING FOR
HOURS.

DOES THE
PRESIDENT
KNOW WHAT
IS GOING
ON?

THE
PRESIDENT
IS FULLY
APPRISED
OF THE
SITUATION.



AH!
AT LAST. IT
LOOKS LIKE THE
MEETING HAS
FINISHED.

WONDER
WOMAN. I'M
LIEUTENANT
MATT CABLE,
C.D.A.

THIS IS
MY WIFE,
ABIGAIL.

AND DOCTOR
ALEC HOLLAND,
THE PRESIDENT'S
ADVISOR--

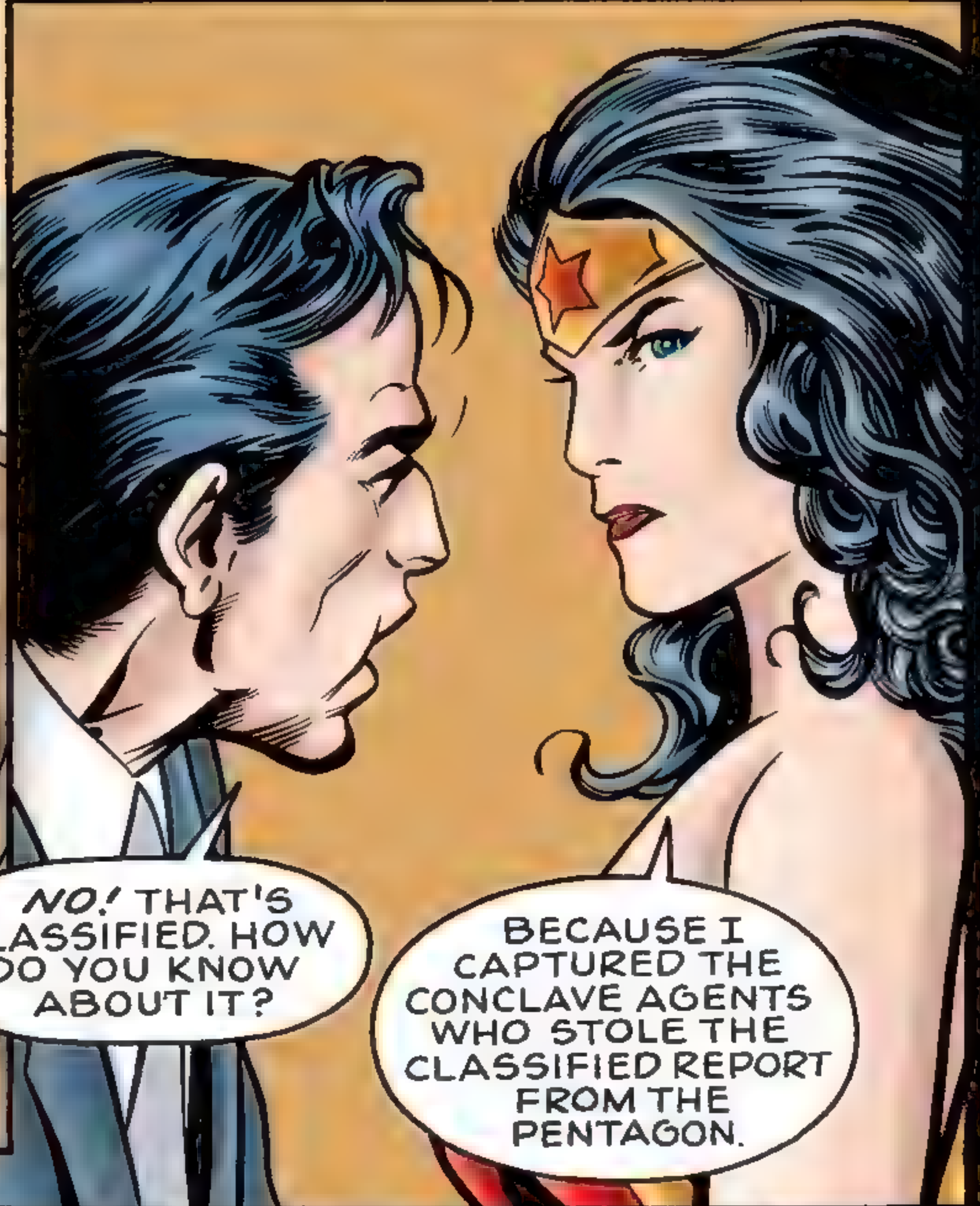
I AM
PLEASED TO
MEET YOU-- IS
THE PRESIDENT
FREE?



THE PRESIDENT WILL BE BUSY FOR A WHILE LONGER.

HE ASKED IF, WHILE YOU'RE WAITING, THAT YOU MIGHT HELP ALEC WITH HIS RESEARCH.

AH YES. THE *BIO-RESTORATIVE SERUM*?



NO! THAT'S CLASSIFIED. HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT IT?

BECAUSE I CAPTURED THE CONCLAVE AGENTS WHO STOLE THE CLASSIFIED REPORT FROM THE PENTAGON.



SO WHAT ARE YOU RESEARCHING, DOCTOR? AND HOW CAN I HELP?

SIMPLY SUPPLY A SMALL DNA SAMPLE TO, AH...

ASCERTAIN IF...

I AM ALIEN?!

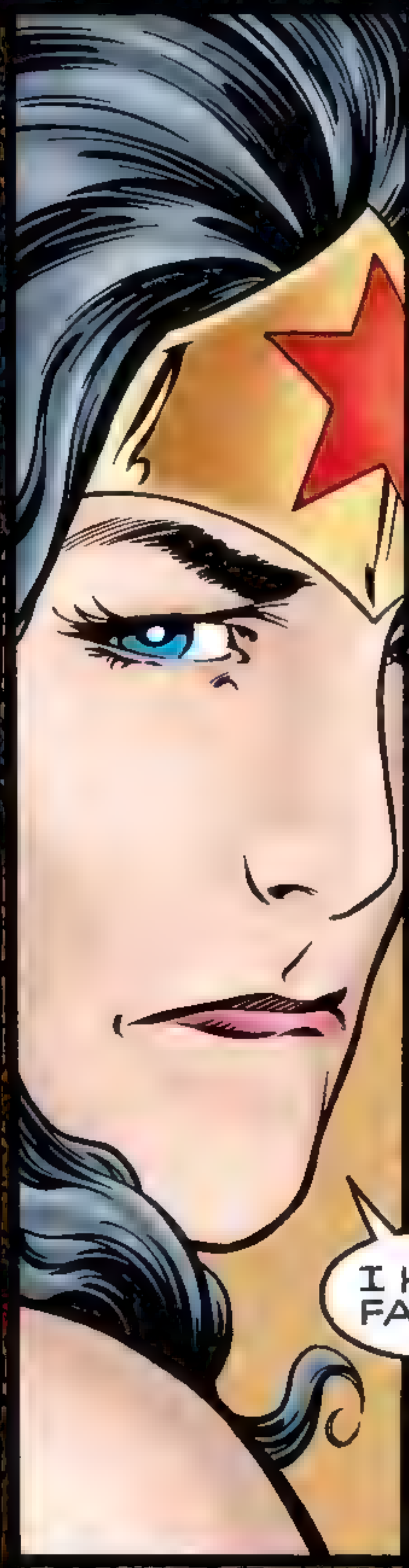


PLEASE, WONDER WOMAN. WE DON'T MEAN TO OFFEND YOU.

WE KNOW WHAT THE COUNTRY OWES YOU.

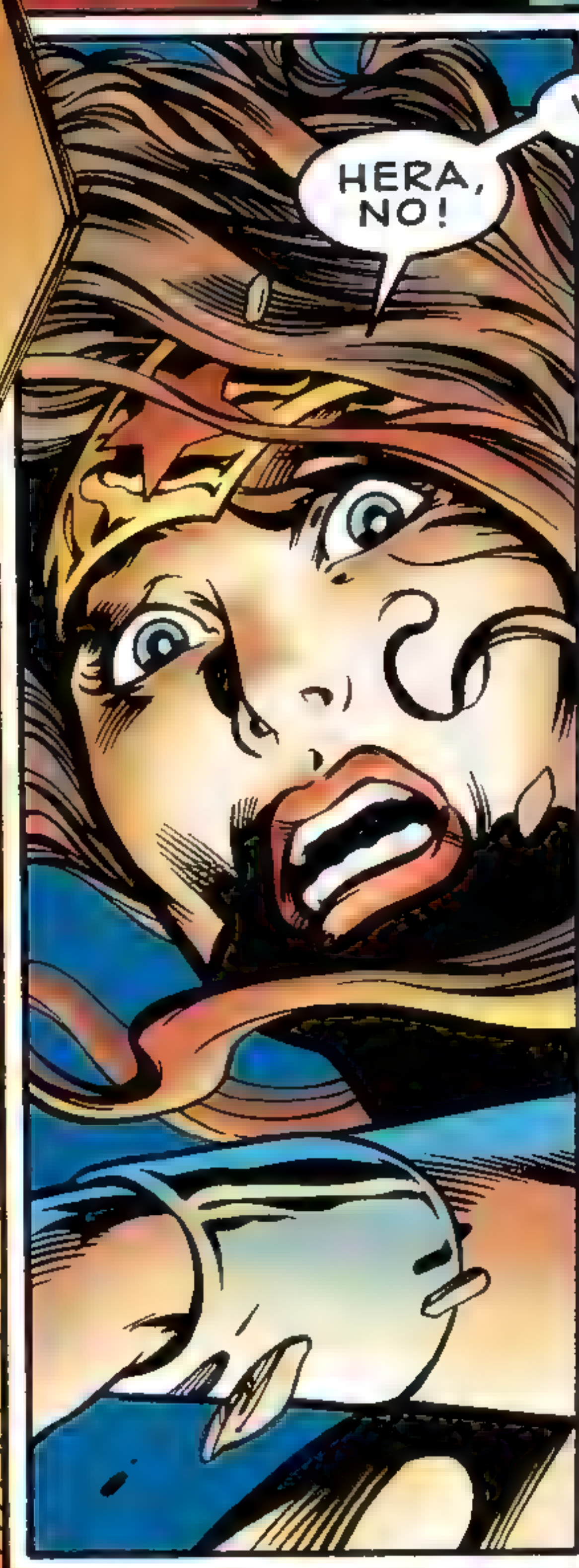
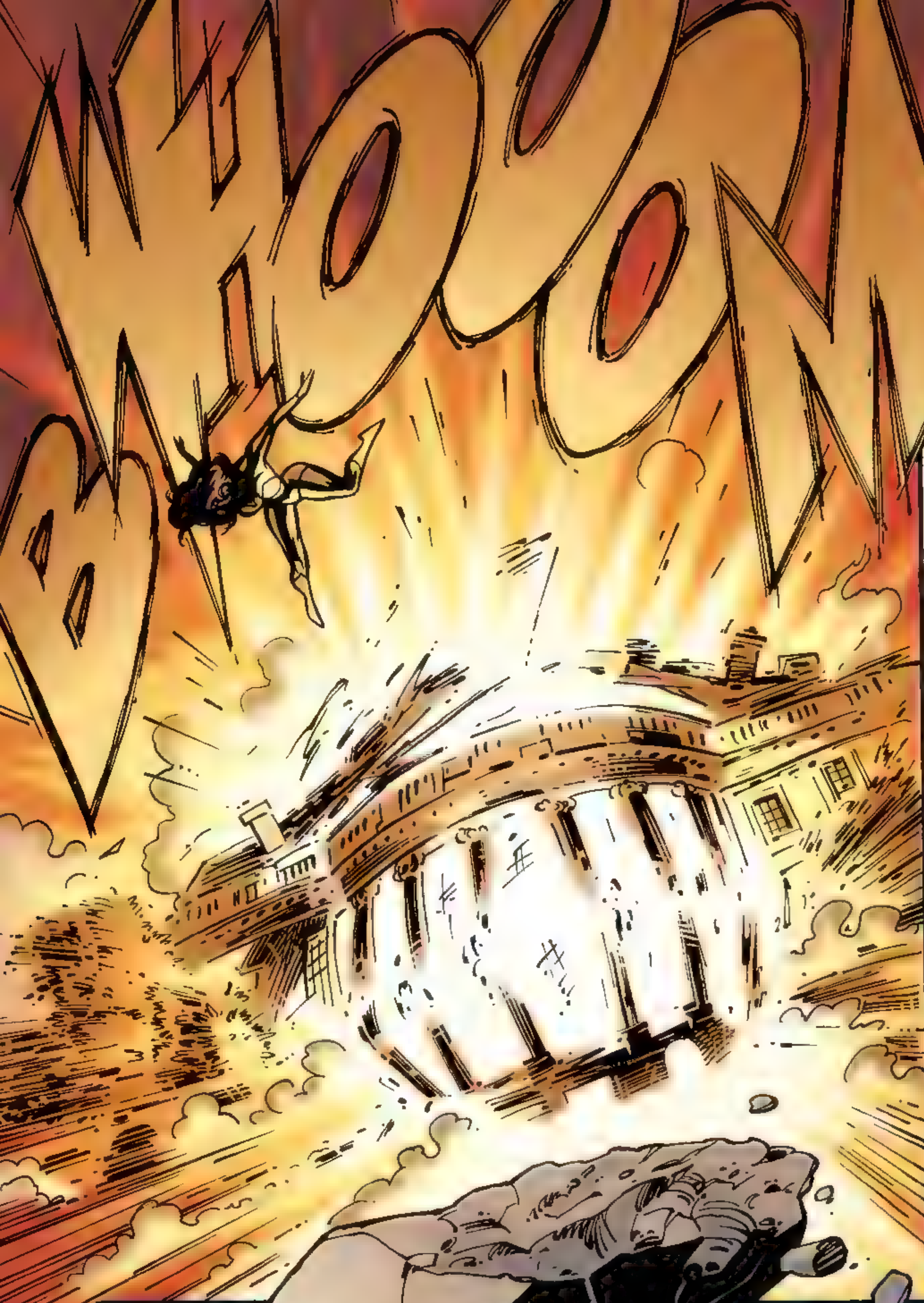
HOW CAN I BEOWED ANYTHING?

MY MISSION WAS TO PROMOTE JUSTICE AND FREEDOM FOR ALL.



I HAVE FAILED.



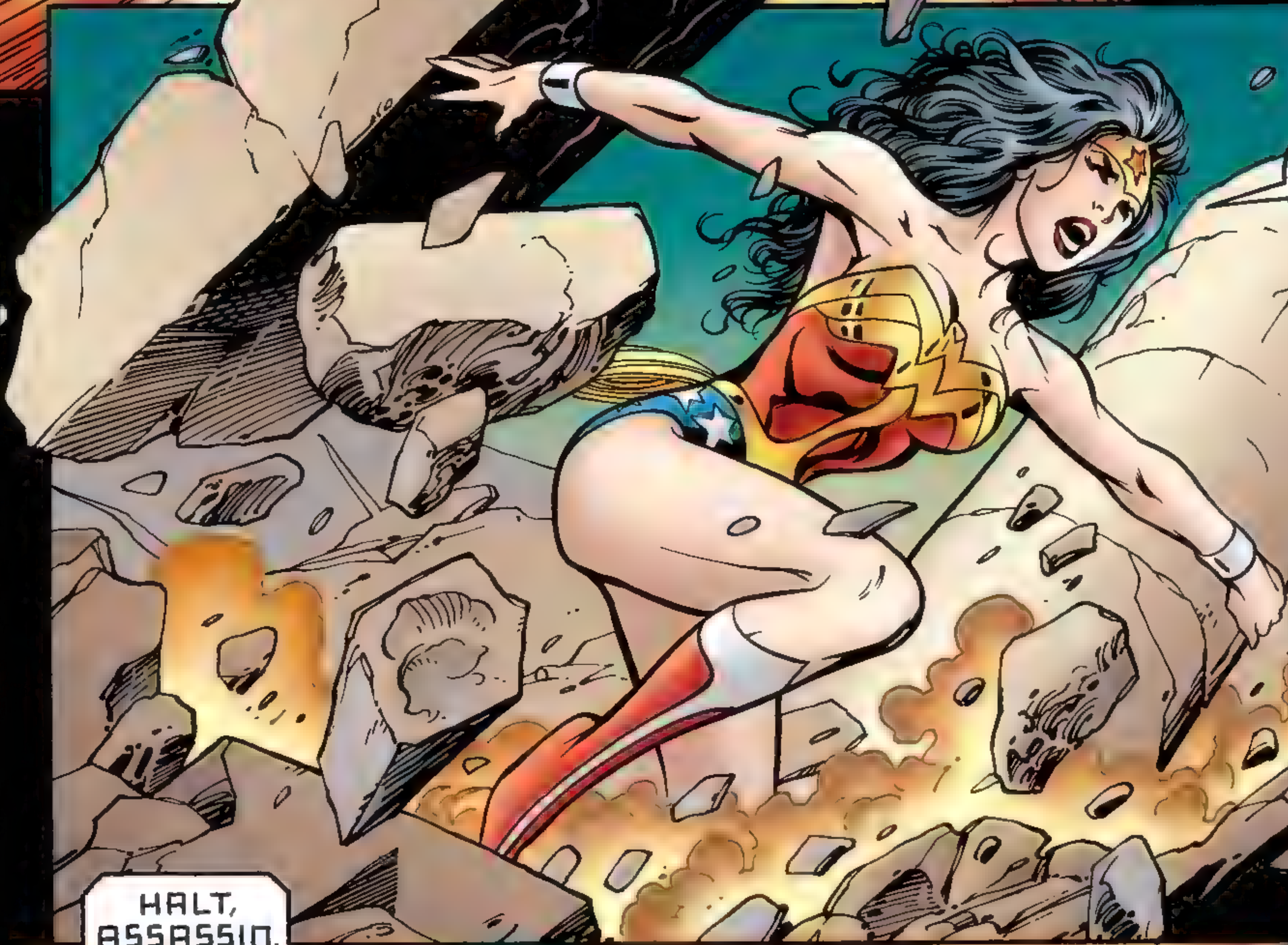
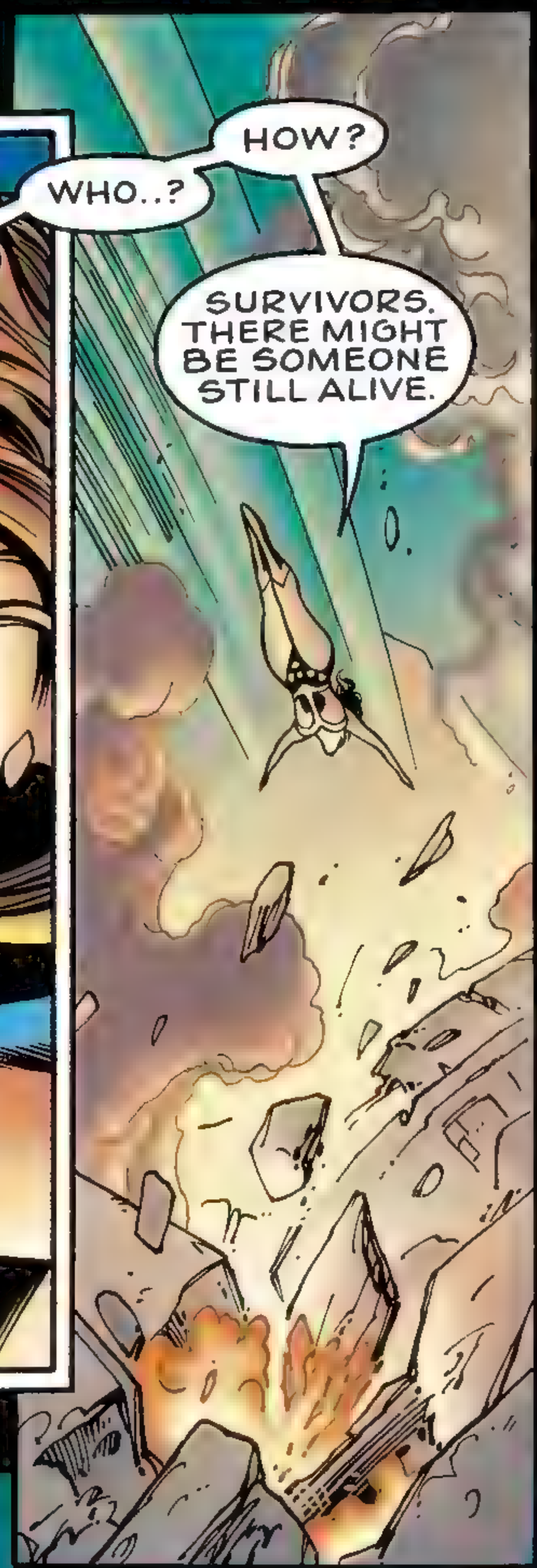


HERA,
NO!

WHO..?

HOW?

SURVIVORS.
THERE MIGHT
BE SOMEONE
STILL ALIVE.



THERE
HAS TO BE
SOMEONE
ALIVE!

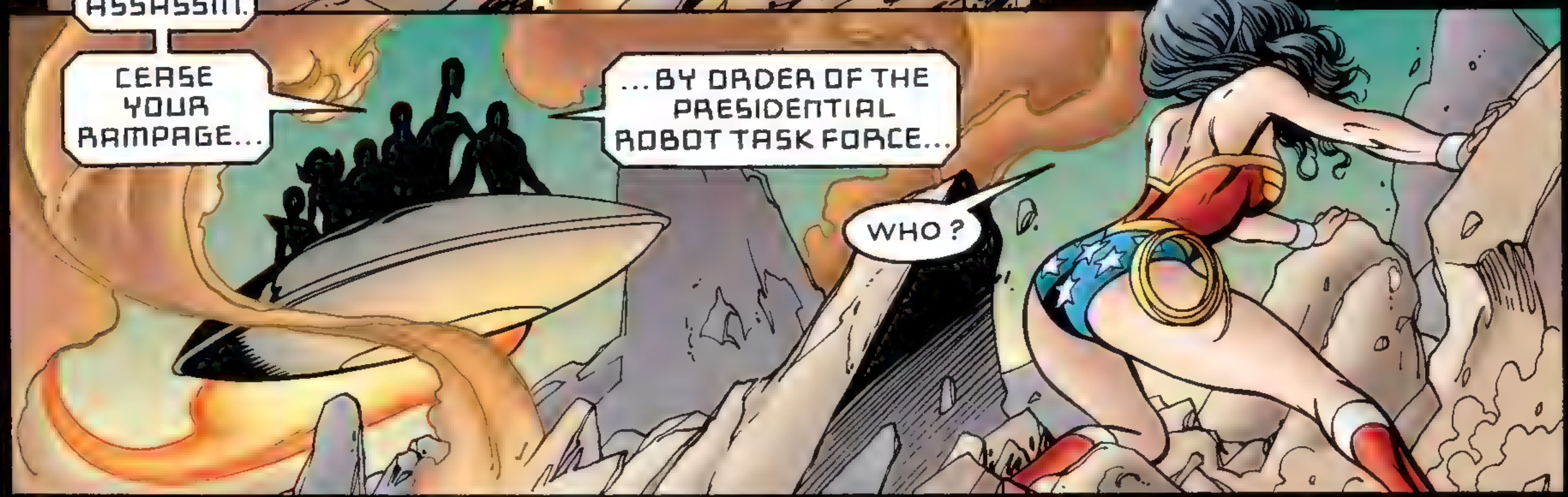
BY ALL
THE GODS!
THERE HAS
TO BE--

HALT,
ASSASSIN.

CEASE
YOUR
RAMPAGE...

...BY ORDER OF THE
PRESIDENTIAL
ROBOT TASK FORCE...

WHO?



... GROUP
DESIGNATE,
METAL
MEN.

SURRENDER,
TARGET, OR UNITS
GOLD AND IRON
WILL TERMINATE.

WAIT! YOU
KNOW ME. I AM
NOT RESPONSIBLE
FOR THIS.

WE SHOULD
BE WORKING
TOGETHER--
SEARCHING FOR
SURVIVORS.

TARGET DEPLOYING NOOSE.

YOU SHOULD
RECOGNIZE MY
MAGICAL LARIAT,
ROBOT.

UNLESS
YOU HAVE BEEN
REPROGRAMMED
SINCE WE LAST
MET.

IF YOU
CONTINUE TO
ATTACK...

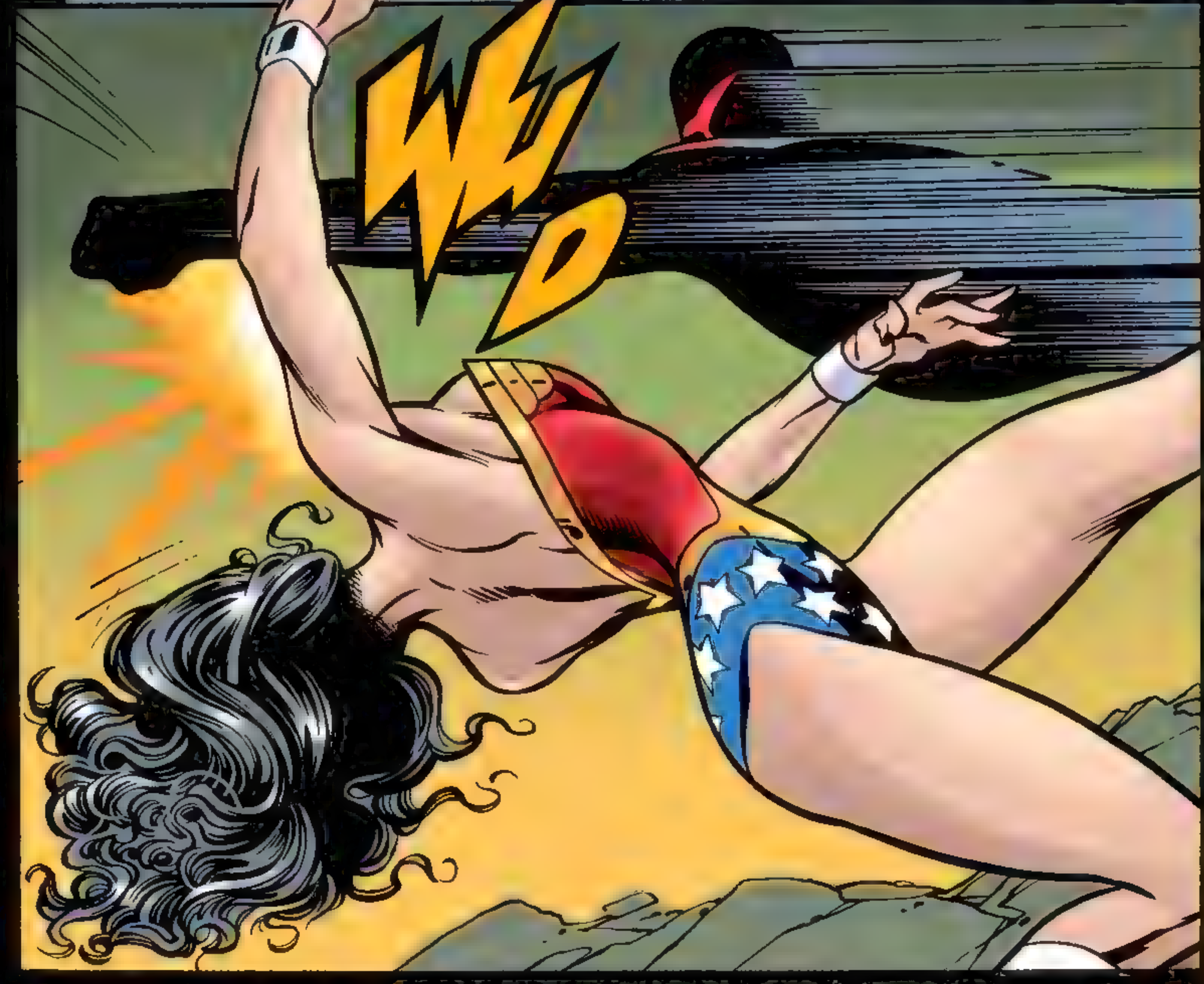
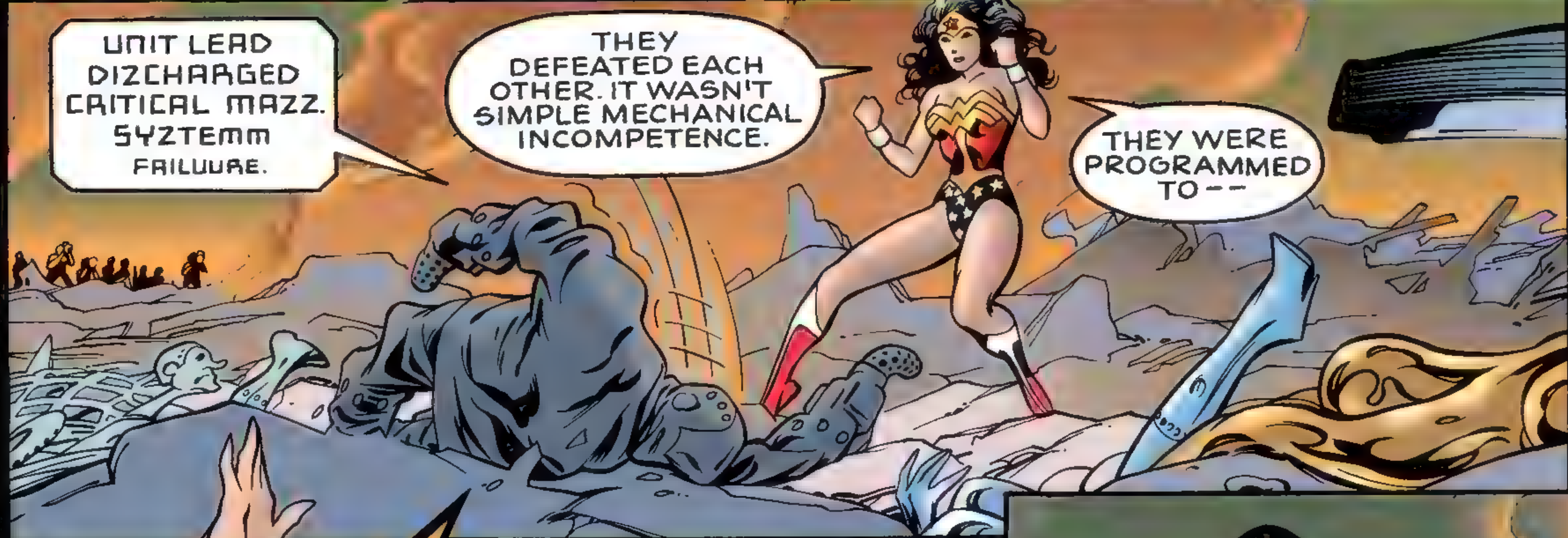
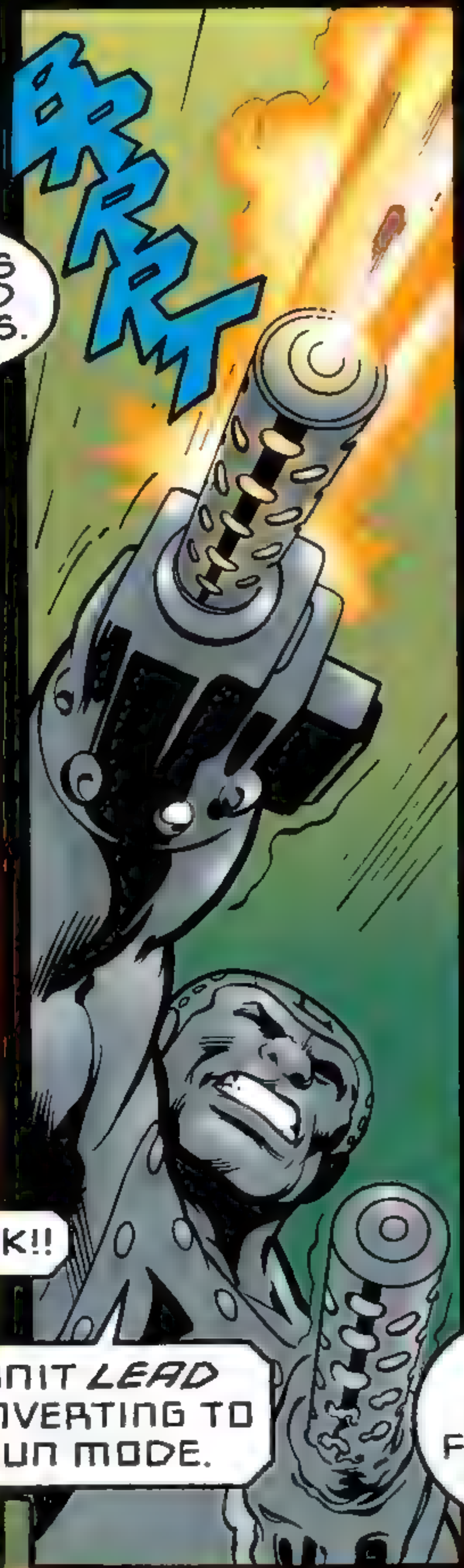
... I WILL
RÉTALIATE.

UNIT *TIN*
REQUIRES
ASSIST.

AFFIRMATIVE.

YOU LEAVE
ME NO OPTION
BUT TO USE
FORCE.





THE PRESIDENT IS DEAD. THE GATHERED CHIEFS OF STAFF ARE DEAD. THE ENTIRE STAFF OF THE WHITE HOUSE... ALL DEAD!

IT'S A NIGHTMARE. BEYOND BELIEF. THE NATION, THE WHOLE WORLD IS STUNNED AT THIS NEW ALIEN ATROCITY...

...AND BY THE IDENTITY OF THE ASSASSIN, WONDER WOMAN, ONCE REGARDED AS THE PERSONIFICATION OF JUSTICE.

THIS LATEST OUTRAGE HAS MADE EVERY ONE OF US ASK THE SAME QUESTION: WHO CAN WE TRUST?

A SOLUTION HAS BEEN CREATED AT THE ALIEN RESEARCH FACILITY BY PROFESSOR HAMILTON...

...AND DOCTOR WILL MAGNUS, CREATOR OF THE METAL MEN--

--WHO SACRIFICED THEMSELVES TO DELAY WONDER WOMAN UNTIL SHE COULD BE STOPPED...

...BY ONE OF A NEW GENERATION OF SUPER ROBOTS.

THE LIBERATORS.

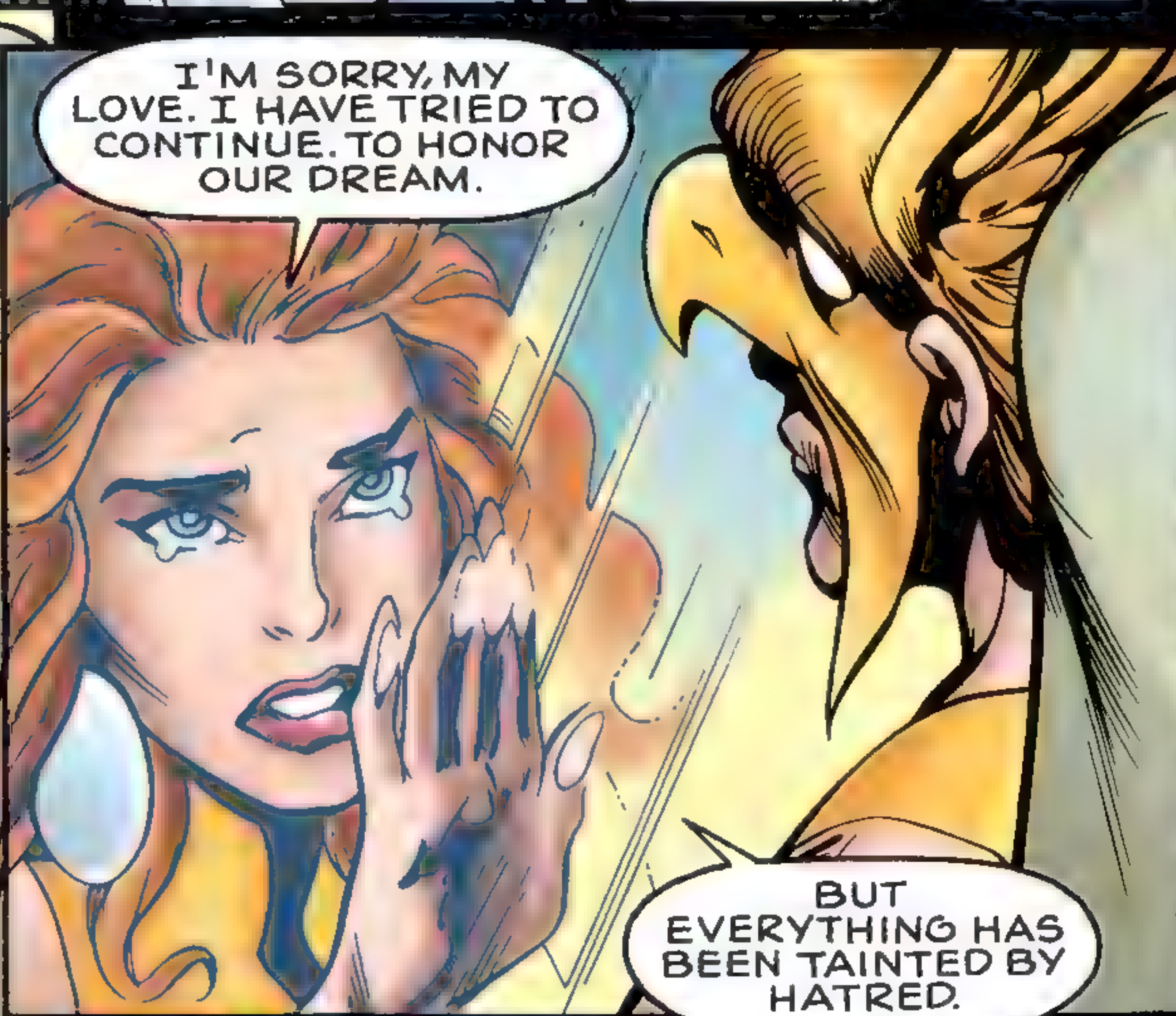
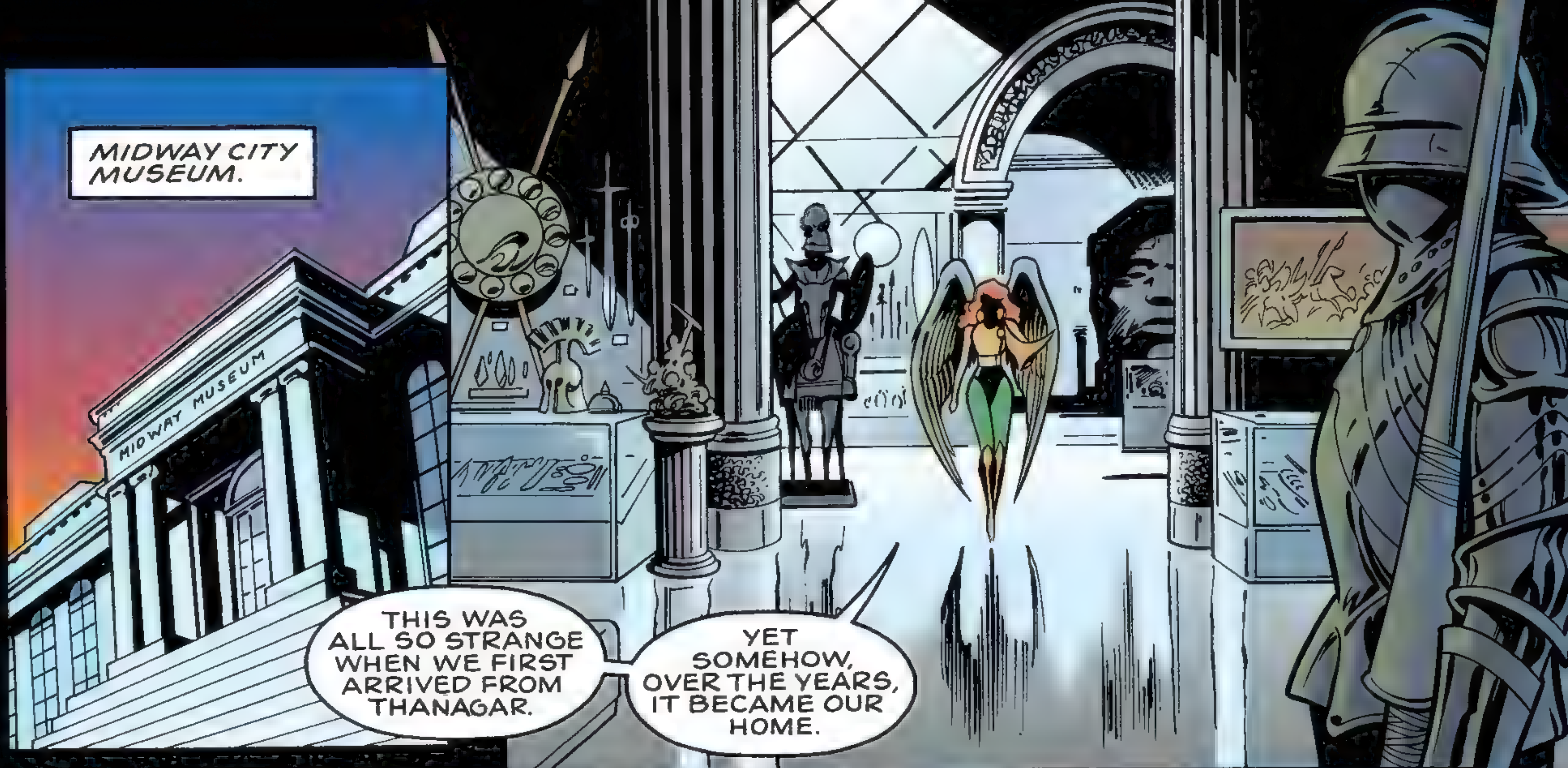
"ALIENS MASQUERADING AS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS HAVE BEGUN TO INCITE PUBLIC DISORDER AND RIOTS."

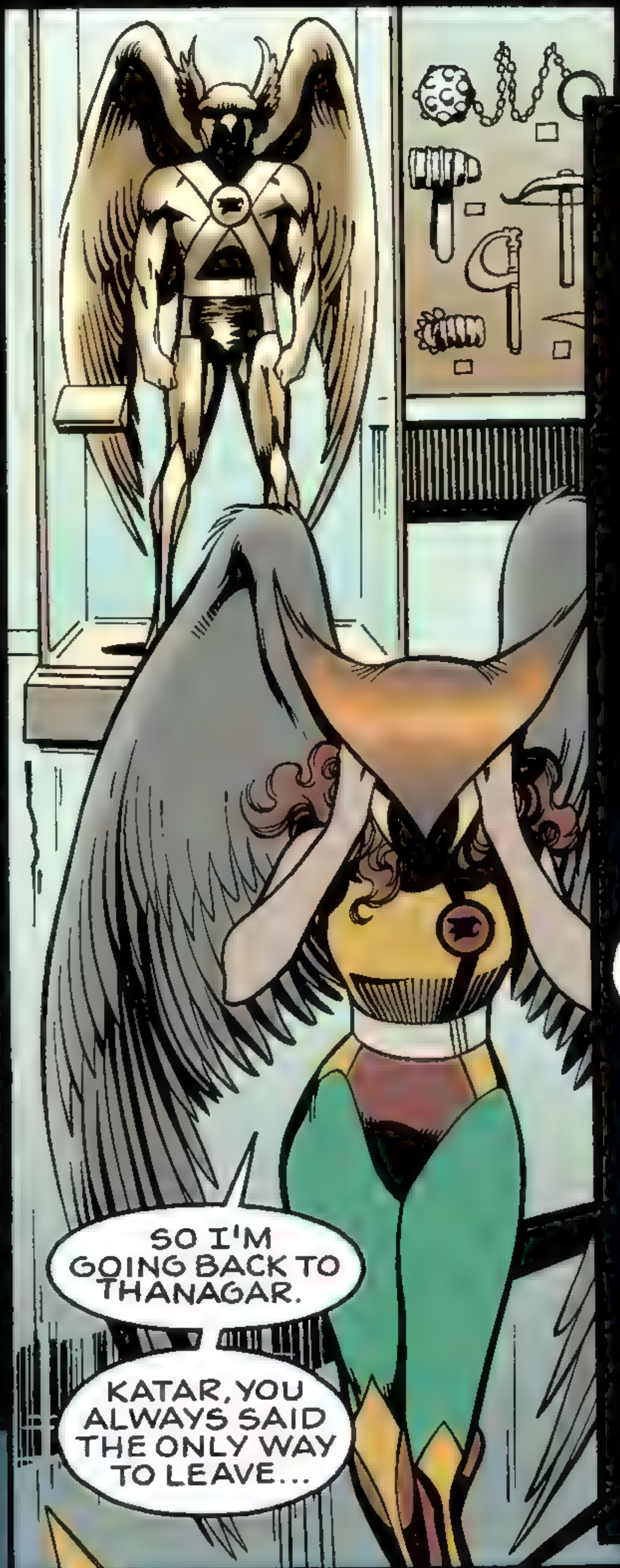
"THEY MUST BE ROOTED OUT BEFORE OUR GREAT COUNTRY SLIDES INTO ANARCHY."

MY FELLOW AMERICANS. WE MUST BE UNITED IN THIS, OUR DARKEST HOUR.

WE HAVE THE MEANS TO CAPTURE ALIENS BUT WE NEED YOUR VIGILANCE AND COOPERATION TO FIND THEM.

WITH YOUR HELP ALL THOSE WHO HAVE ELUDED CAPTURE WILL SOON BE IN CUSTODY.





SO I'M
GOING BACK TO
THANAGAR.

KATAR, YOU
ALWAYS SAID
THE ONLY WAY
TO LEAVE...



...WAS
TO START
WALKING AND
DON'T LOOK
BACK.

NEVER
LOOK
BACK.



I'LL
RENDEZVOUS
WITH OUR... MY
STARSHIP AS IT
DESCENDS FROM
GEOSYNCHRO-
NOUS ORBIT.

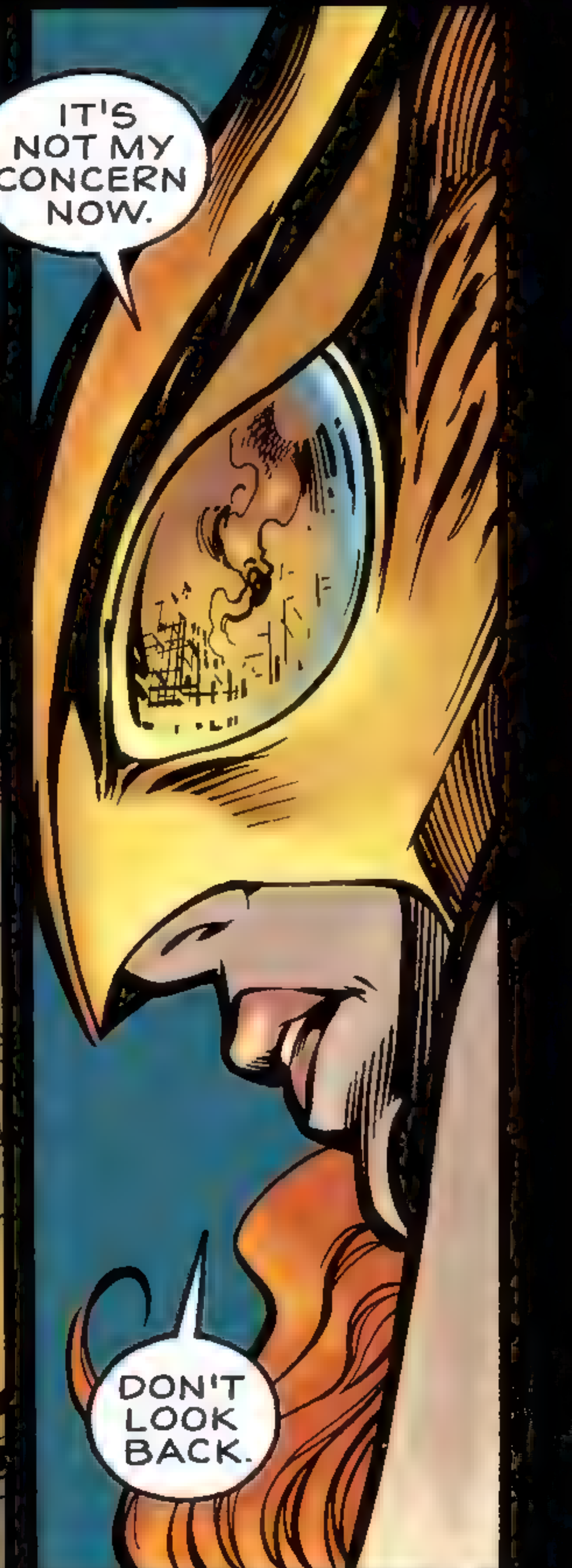


ITS CLOAKING
DEVICE MAKES IT
INVISIBLE TO HUMAN
TRACKING SYSTEMS
AND VISUAL
FREQUENCIES...

...ALTHOUGH
THERE WOULD
BE LITTLE DANGER
OF IT BEING SEEN
WITH ALL THIS
SMOKE.



IT LOOKS
LIKE RIOTERS
ARE STARTING
FIRES ALL
OVER THE
CITY.

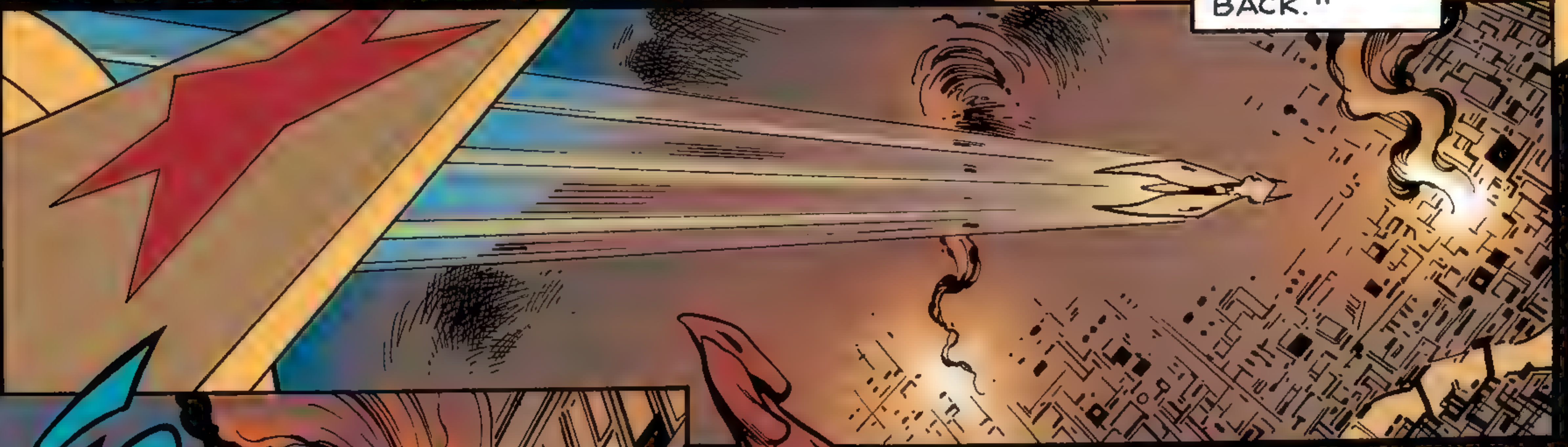


IT'S
NOT MY
CONCERN
NOW.

DON'T
LOOK
BACK.



"NEVER LOOK BACK."



THE BUILDING'S COLLAPSING.

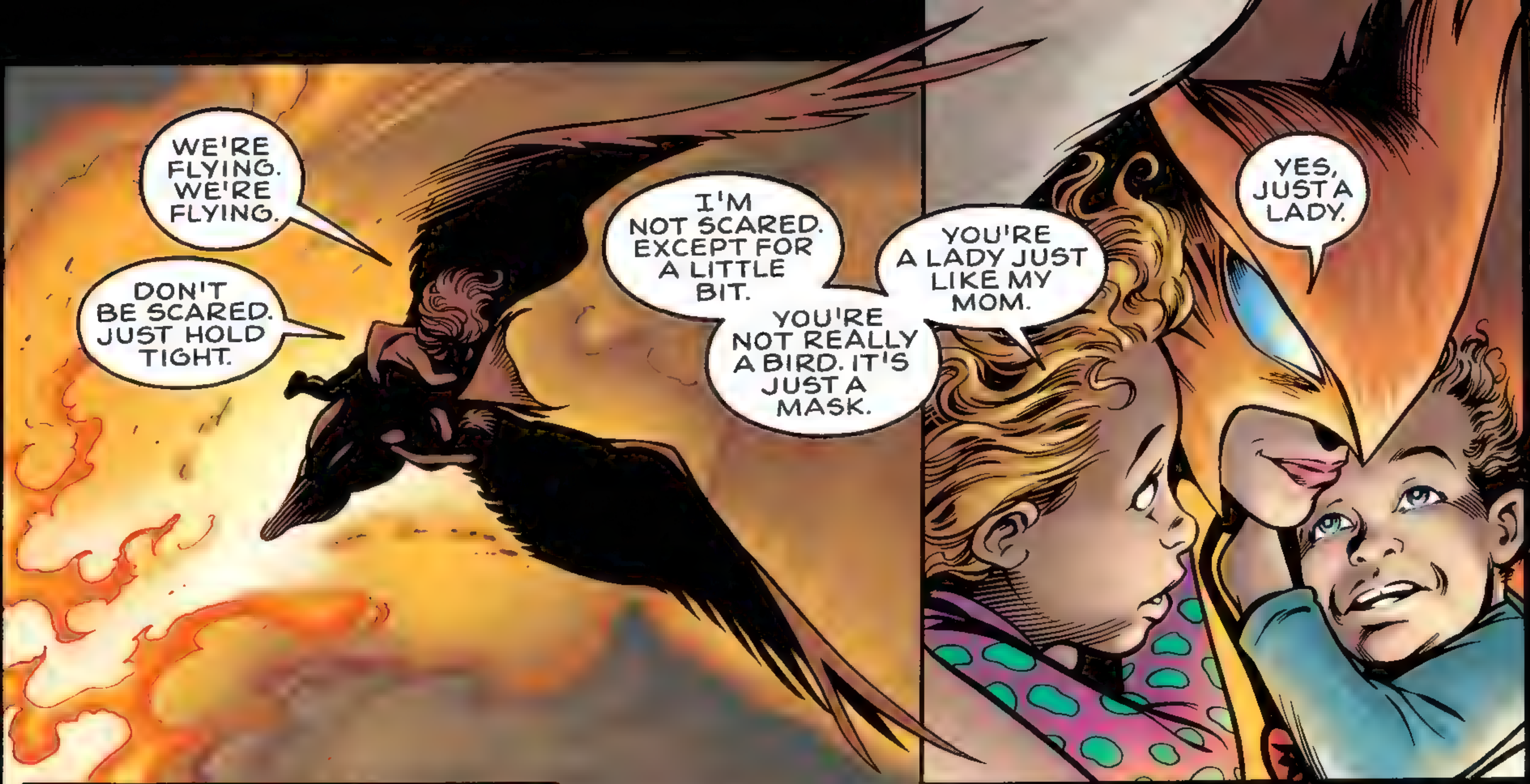
MY CHILDREN!



LOOK! UP IN THE SKY...

...IT'S HAWKGIRL.







WAIT, I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO RISK YOURSELVES FOR ME.

THIS IS OUR FIGHT TOO, HAWKLADY.

RIGHT. SOMEONE'S TRYIN' TO TURN US AGAINST EACH OTHER.

SCARIN' US WITH FASCIST PROPAGANDA.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

AND SETTIN' FIRE TO OUR HOMES.



WE NEVER BELIEVED WHAT THE TV SAID, HAWKWOMAN. EVEN BEFORE TONIGHT.

YES. YES HE WAS.

THANK YOU.

WE KNOW WHAT THE CITY OWES YOU... AND YOUR MAN.

HE WAS A HERO.



THANK YOU ALL.

YOUR COURAGE HAS GIVEN ME HOPE FOR THE FUTURE--



THIS IS AN ILLEGAL GATHERING. CONSORTING WITH ALIENS IS A CRIME.

DISPERSE IMMEDIATELY OR YOU WILL BE ARRESTED.

THE BATCAVE.

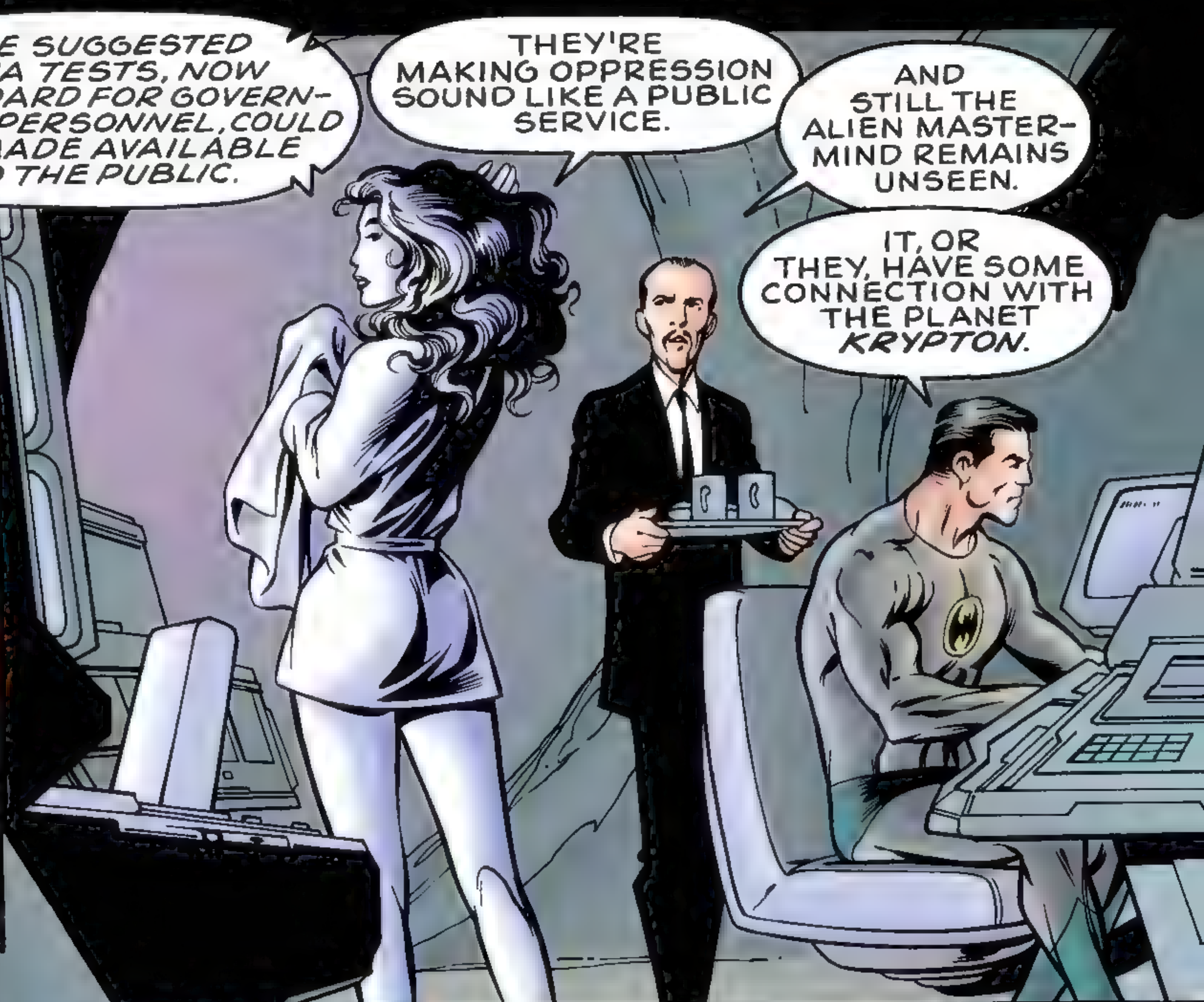
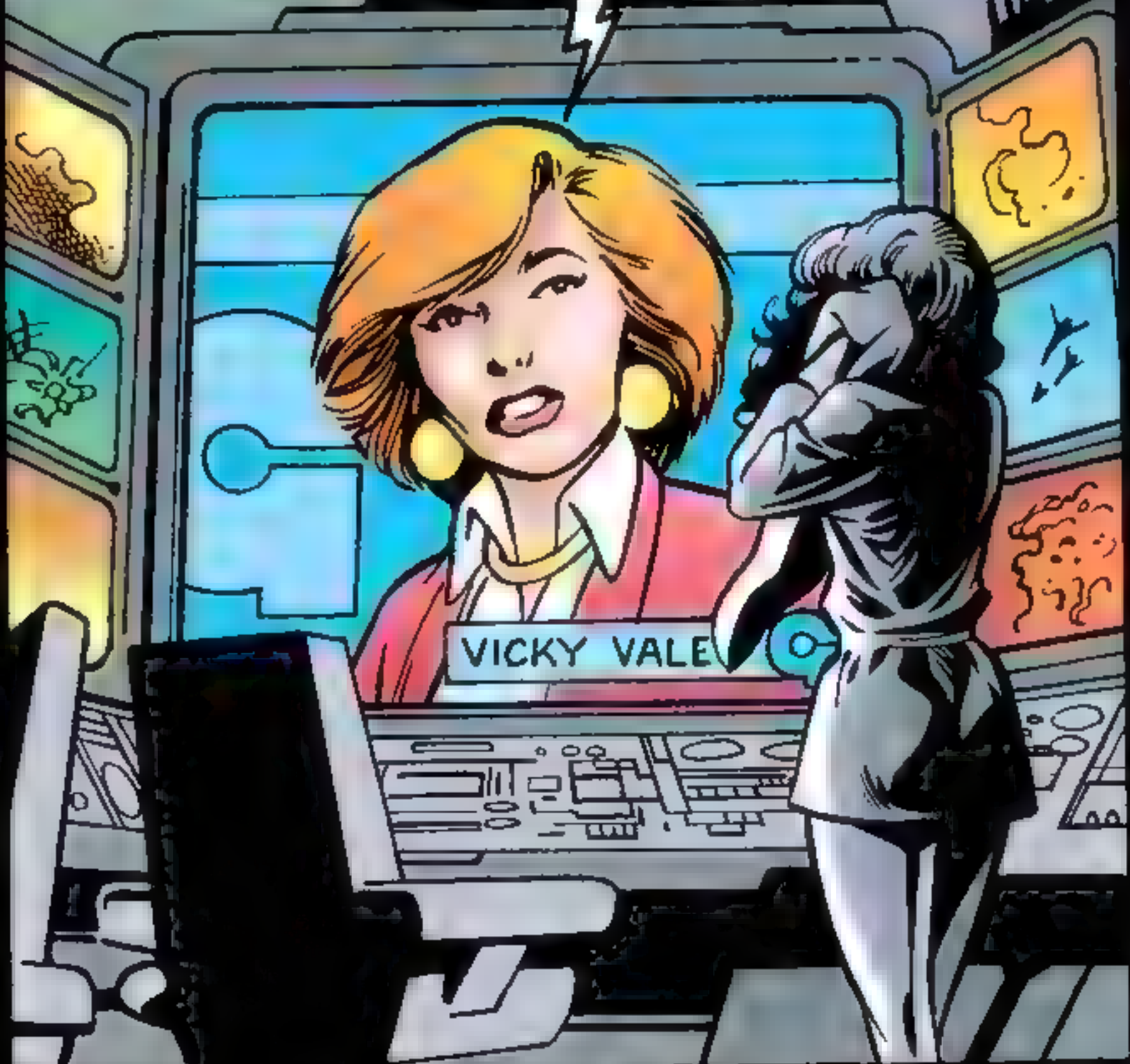
... PROFESSOR HAMILTON STATED THAT GENETIC TESTING IS THE ONLY WAY TO BE CERTAIN AN INDIVIDUAL IS TRULY HUMAN.

HE SUGGESTED DNA TESTS, NOW STANDARD FOR GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL, COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

THEY'RE MAKING OPPRESSION SOUND LIKE A PUBLIC SERVICE.

AND STILL THE ALIEN MASTER-MIND REMAINS UNSEEN.

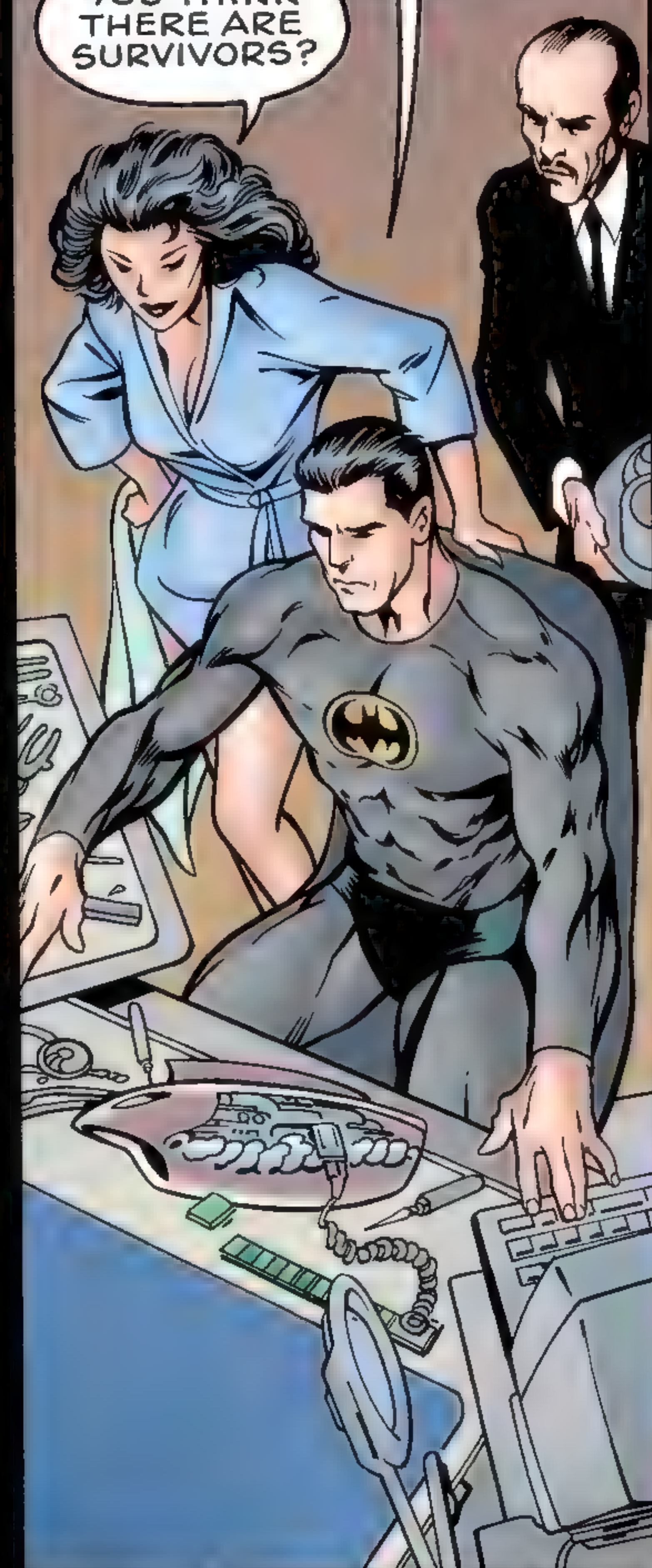
IT, OR THEY, HAVE SOME CONNECTION WITH THE PLANET KRYPTON.



KRYPTON? I HAVEN'T HEARD OF THAT ONE BEFORE.

IT'S NOT SURPRISING. THE ENTIRE RACE WAS REPORTED TO HAVE PERISHED DECADES AGO WHEN KRYPTON EXPLODED.

YOU THINK THERE ARE SURVIVORS?



POSSIBLY.

THE THANAGARIAN WEAPONS INDEX HAWKMAN GAVE THE JLA IDENTIFIES THE JOKER'S WEAPONS AS A KRYPTONIAN DESIGN.

THERE'S NO INFORMATION ON THE KRYPTONIAN SPECIES...

...BUT THERE ARE HIGHLY DETAILED WEAPON SCHEMATICS.

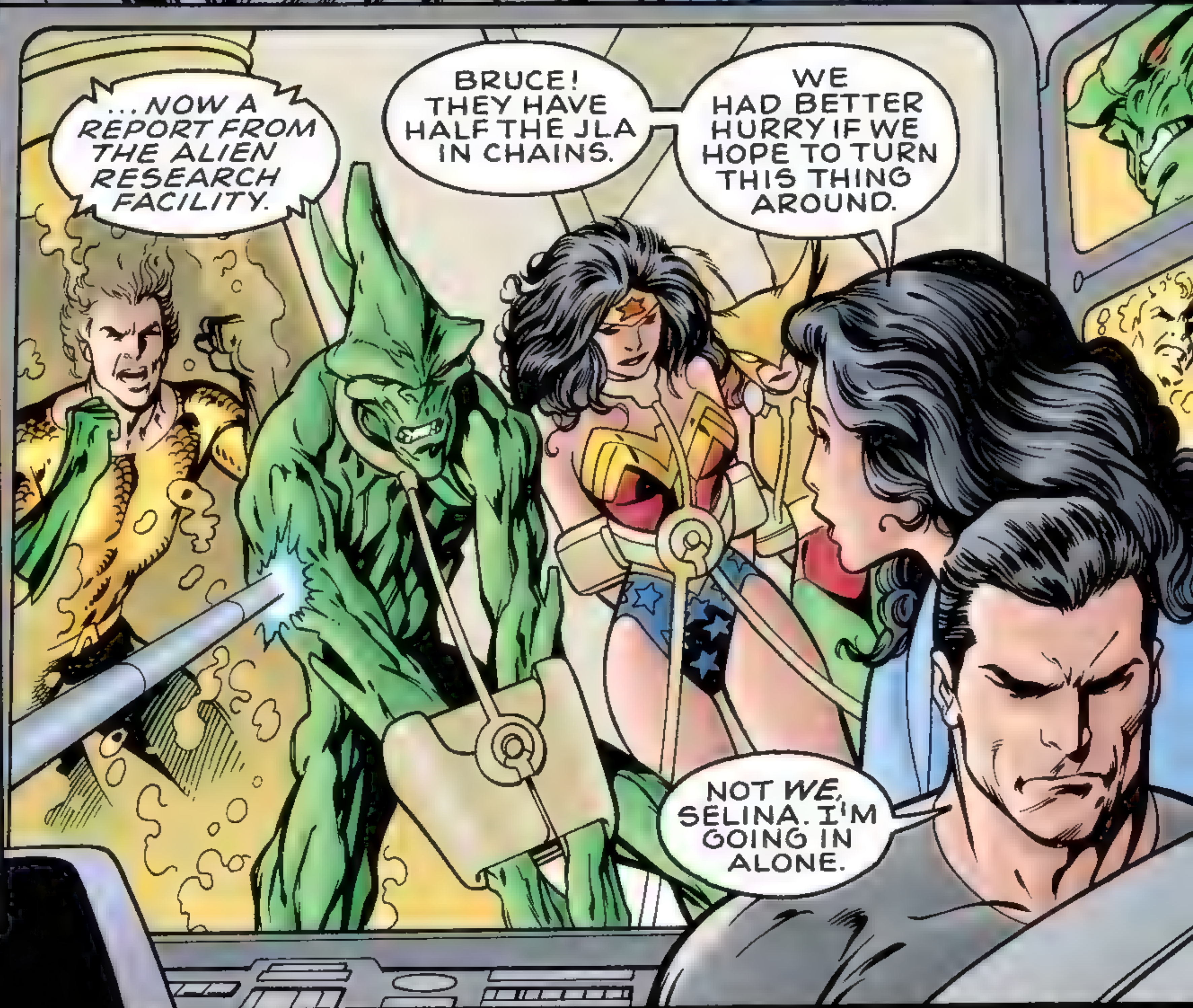


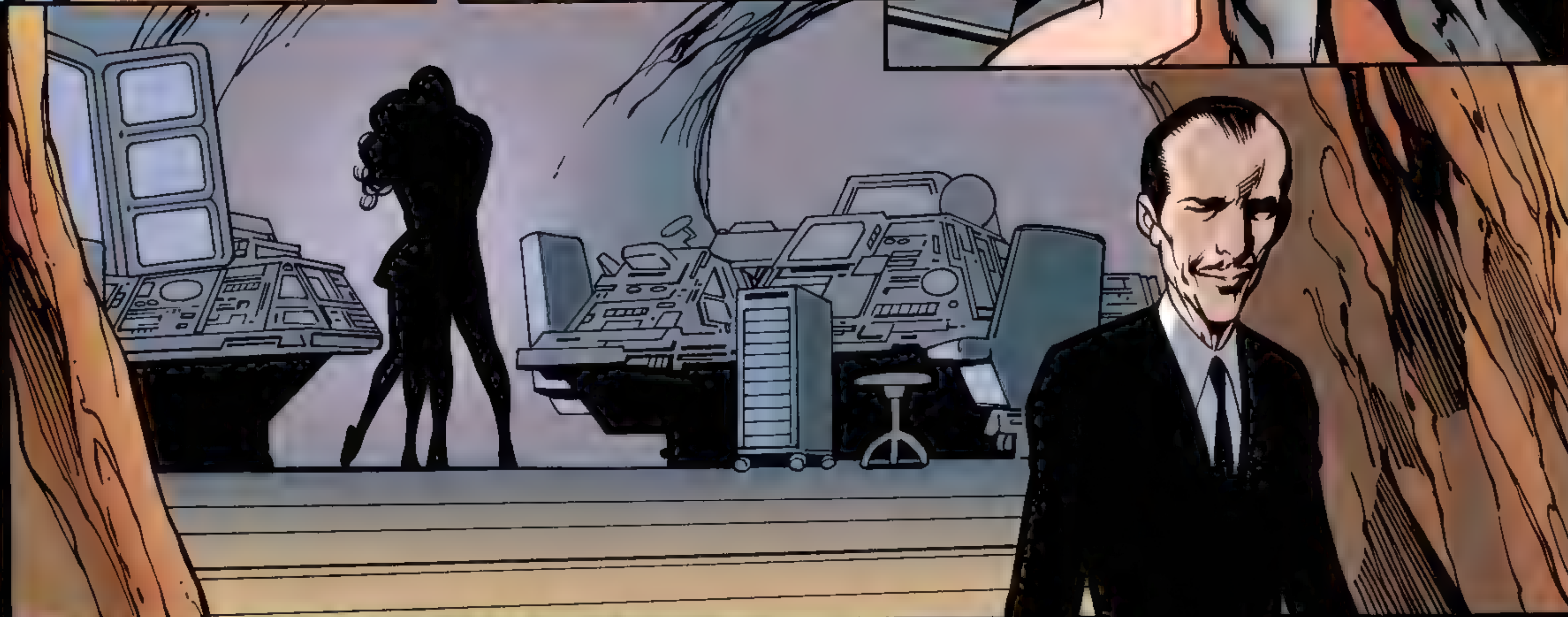
... NOW A REPORT FROM THE ALIEN RESEARCH FACILITY.

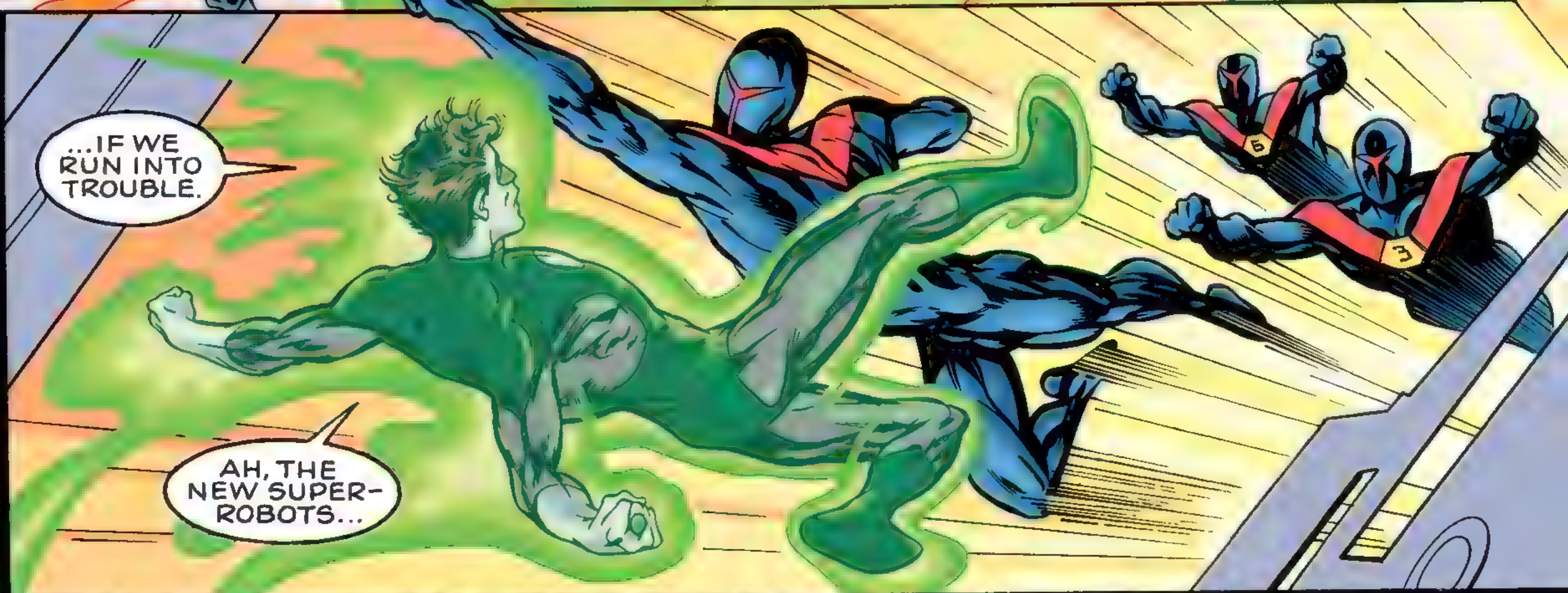
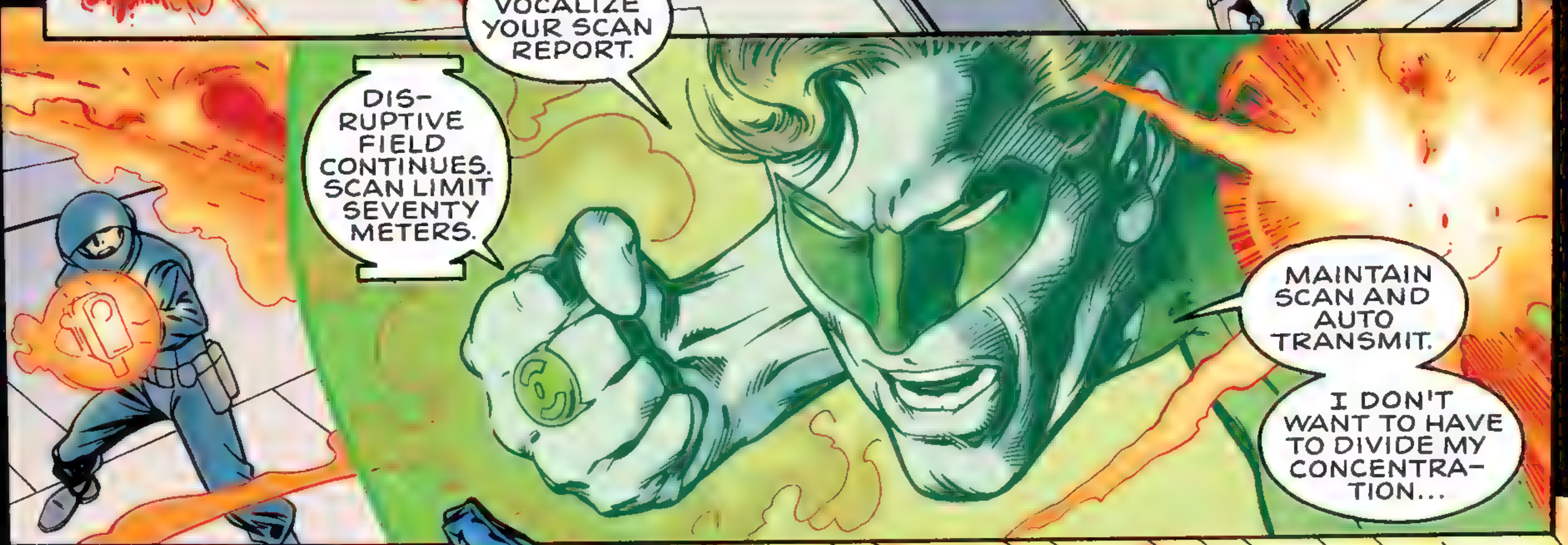
BRUCE! THEY HAVE HALF THE JLA IN CHAINS.

WE HAD BETTER HURRY IF WE HOPE TO TURN THIS THING AROUND.

NOT WE, SELINA. I'M GOING IN ALONE.









...LET'S SEE
HOW YOU FARE
AGAINST--



GAHH!!

...BROKE MY
ARM THROUGH
THE SHIELD.



NOTHING
ON EARTH IS
THAT STRONG
...UHHFT!

WHAT
ARE THEY,
RING?



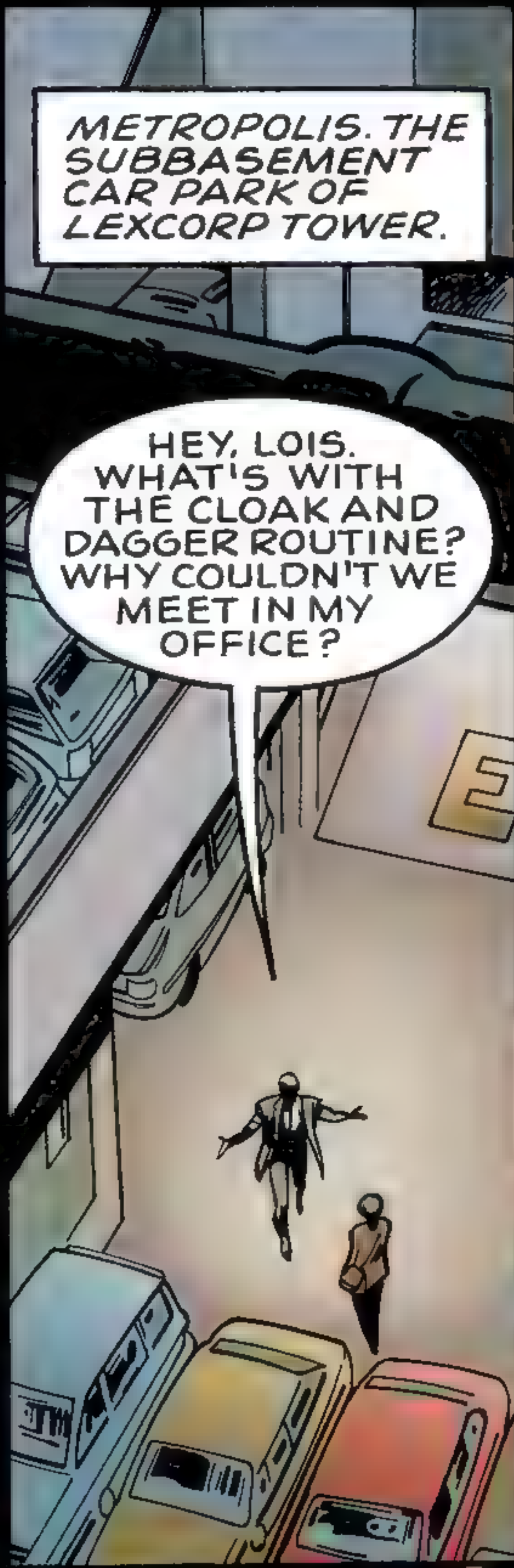
WHAT ARE
THEY?



CLONED
REPLICANTS.
SYNTHESIZED
DNA TEM-
PLATE.



SOURCE,
KRYPTON!



METROPOLIS. THE SUBBASEMENT CAR PARK OF LEXCORP TOWER.

HEY, LOIS. WHAT'S WITH THE CLOAK AND DAGGER ROUTINE? WHY COULDN'T WE MEET IN MY OFFICE?



BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN TRUST YOU.

WHOAH!!

TAKE IT EASY...

LUTHOR IS A PUPPET OF THE ALIEN INVADERS.

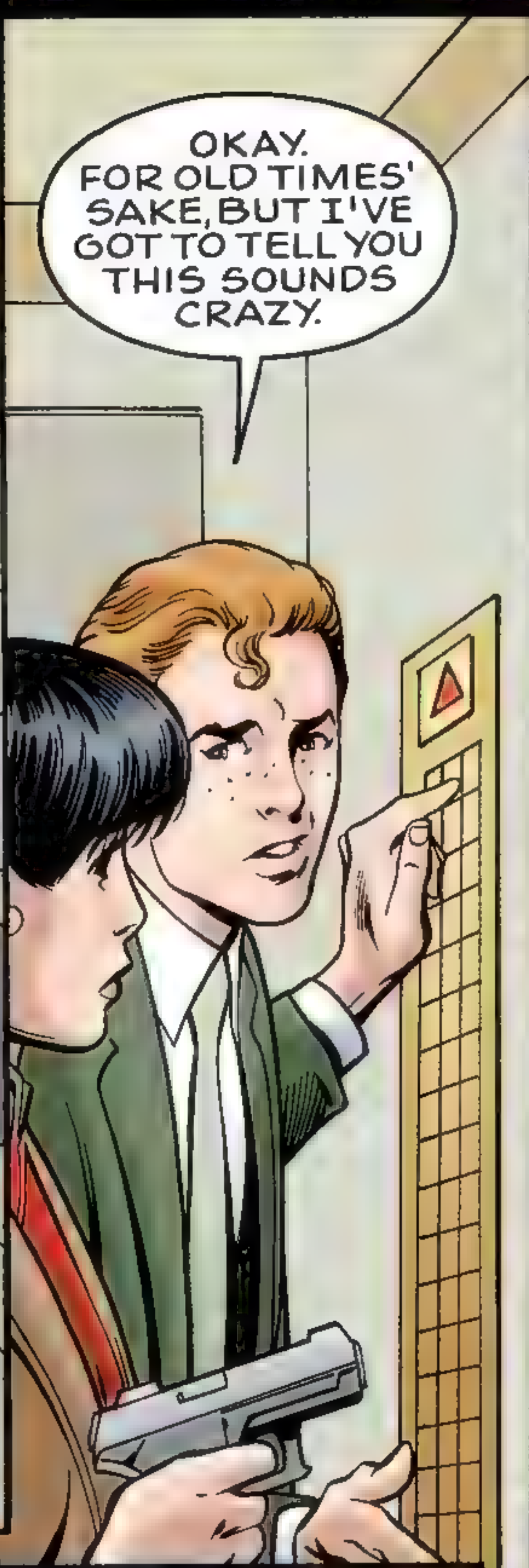


I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT, LOIS.

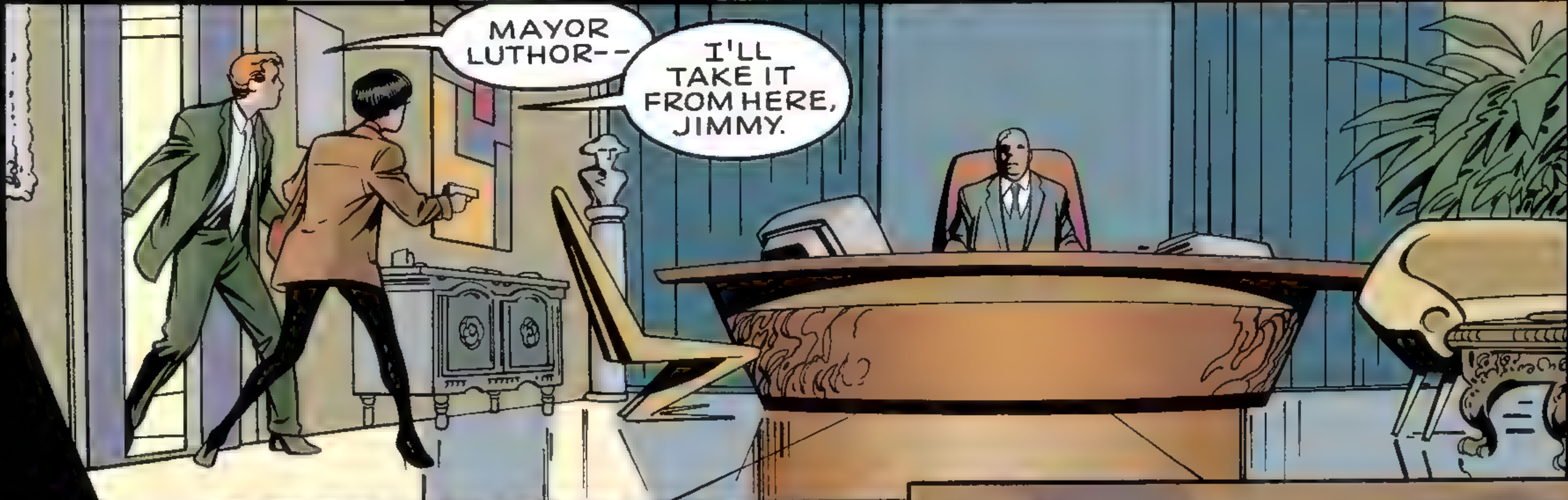
PROVE IT.

HOW?

TAKE ME TO HIM.



OKAY. FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE, BUT I'VE GOT TO TELL YOU THIS SOUNDS CRAZY.



MAYOR LUTHOR--

I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE, JIMMY.



MAYOR LUTHOR...

LUTHOR ... CAN YOU HEAR ME?

HE'S IN SOME SORT OF TRANCE.



GGNARGGH!!

...?!



GHNNARRR!!

STAY
BEHIND ME,
JIMMY. GET
BACK TO THE
ELEVATOR.

IT'S OKAY,
LOIS. **KRYPTO**
IS JUST A LOYAL
GUARD DOG EAGER
TO PROTECT HIS
MASTER.



ARE YOU
CRAZY!?

BAM
BAM

yeelp!

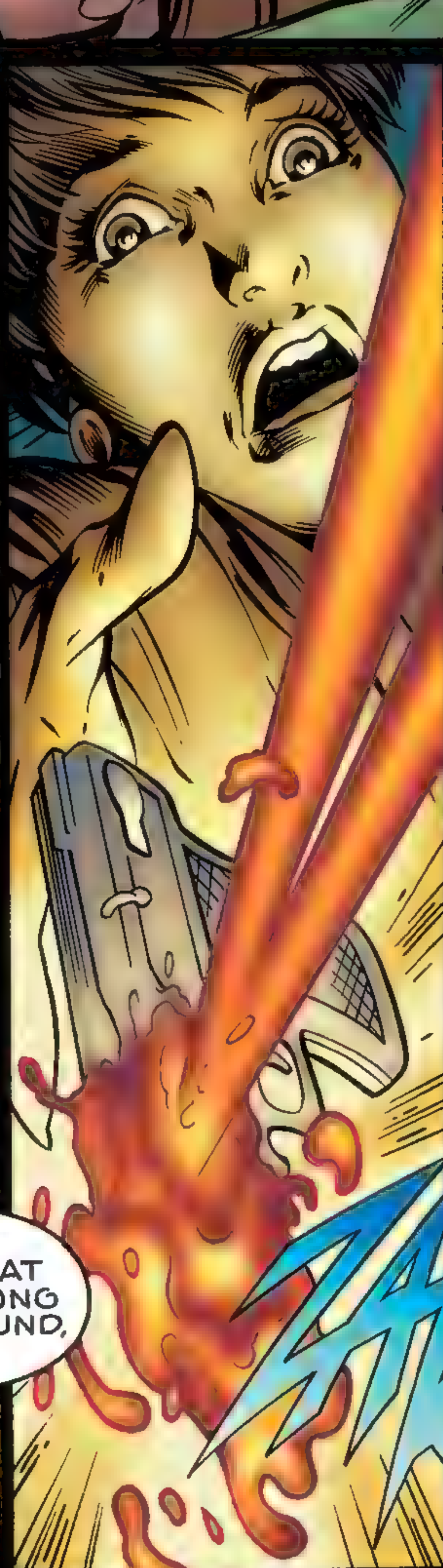
STOP, LOIS.
KRYPTO'S CELLULAR
FISSION MUST HAVE
ESCALATED. YOU'RE
HURTING HIM.



WHAT
ARE YOU
RAMBLING
ABOUT?

ARE
YOU UNDER
THE ALIEN'S
CONTROL?

YOU
HAVE THAT
THE WRONG
WAY AROUND,
LOIS.



I AM
IN CONTROL
HERE.

THE ALIEN
RESEARCH
FACILITY.

AARRAHHGH!!

WE'RE
IN...

...BUT
I'M BUSHED.
MAINTAINING THE
SPECIFIC VIBRATION
TO PHASE THROUGH
MILES OF EARTH
IS REALLY
TIRING.

THE DATA
GREEN LANTERN
TRANSMITTED
SHOWED IT AS
THE ONLY WAY
TO BYPASS THE
SECURITY.

YEAH, HE
TOOK THE REAL
RISK COMING IN
THE FRONT DOOR.
NOW WE'VE GOT
TO DO OUR
PART.

THE
RING'S STILL
TRANSMITTING. AS
LANTERN EXPECTED,
HE'S BEEN PUT
WITH THE
OTHERS.

THEY'RE
IMPRISONED IN
A STASIS FIELD
--AND LOCATED
SIX LEVELS
ABOVE US.

I
CAN GET
US THERE
FAST.

"FASTER
THAN A
SPEEDING
BULLET."

SO FAST
NO ONE WILL
BE ABLE TO
SEE US.

THEY'RE
STRAIGHT
AHEAD.

ALL
LINED UP
LIKE TROPHIES
FOR ANOTHER
PRESS CONFER-
ENCE!

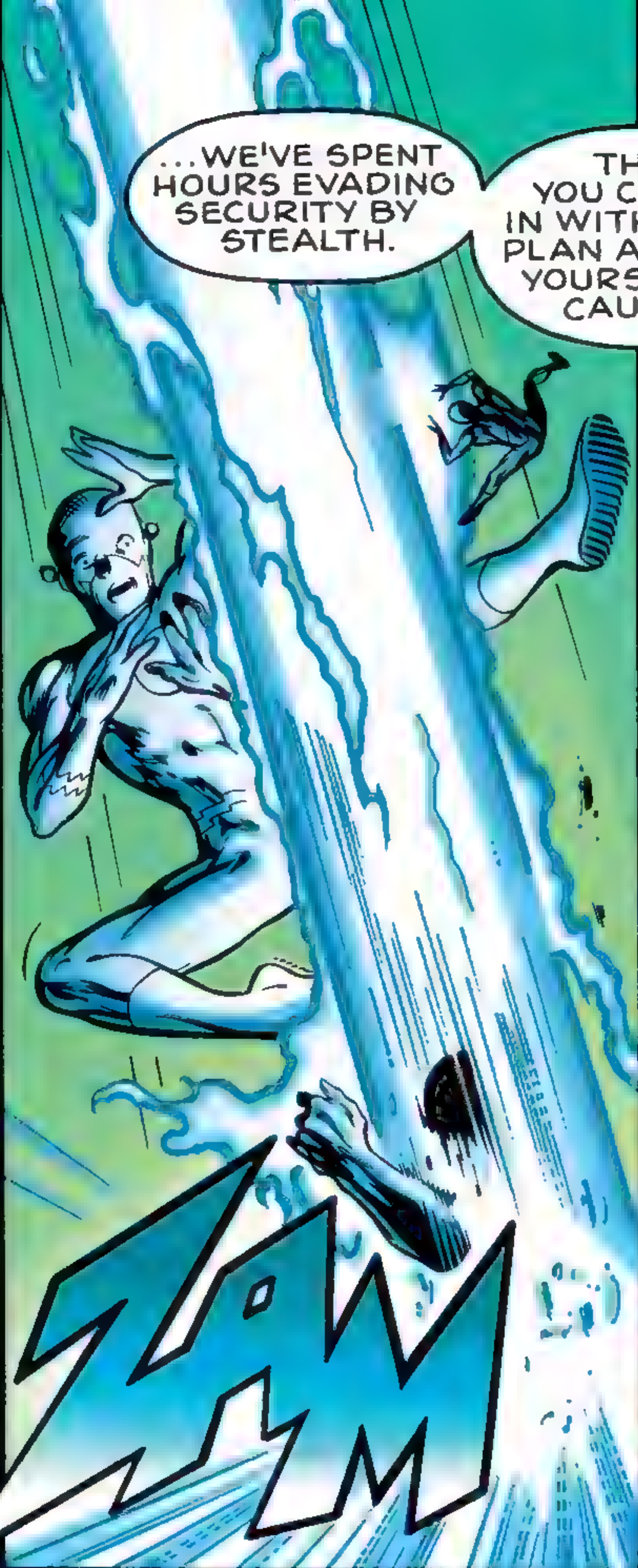
BUT WHY
HAVE THEY BEEN
ISOLATED SO FAR
FROM THE REST OF
THE PRISONERS?
IT COULD BE
A...

...TRAP.

THE
ROBOT WAS
WAITING
FOR US.

gahk!

YOU
BLUNDERING
FOOLS...

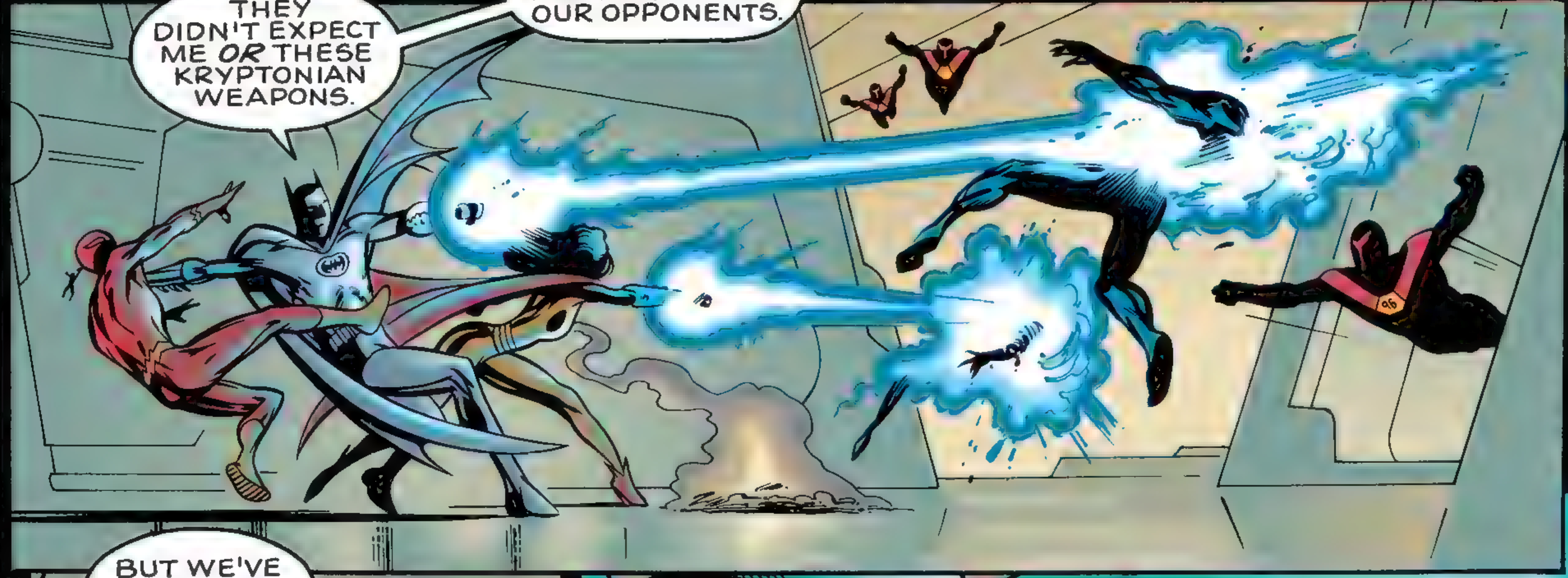


...WE'VE SPENT HOURS EVADING SECURITY BY STEALTH.

THEN YOU CHARGE IN WITHOUT A PLAN AND GET YOURSELVES CAUGHT.



BATMAN! WE THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD.



THEY DIDN'T EXPECT ME OR THESE KRYPTONIAN WEAPONS.

FORTUNATELY FOR YOU, SO DID OUR OPPONENTS.



BUT WE'VE LOST THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.

SO RELEASE THE REST OF THE JLA, QUICKLY.

ALL WE CAN DO NOW IS MAKE A STAND...

...AND FIGHT TO THE FINISH.



METROPOLIS.

I COULDN'T RESIST TOYING WITH YOU, LOIS...

I KNEW KRYPTO WAS DYING BUT I THOUGHT HE WAS STILL INVULNERABLE-- OR I'D HAVE TAKEN YOUR GUN FROM YOU EARLIER.

HIS RUN-IN WITH THE OUTSIDERS MUST HAVE ACCELERATED THE *HYBRID DNA* DISASSOCIATION.



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, JIMMY? WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU?

IS THAT JOURNALISTIC PROBING, LOIS, OR DO YOU REALLY CARE FOR JIMMY?

"ALIEN CRAFT UNEARTHED NEAR SMALLVILLE BY LEXCORP." THERE'S A HEADLINE YOU NEVER SAW.

LUTHOR HID THE SHIP. SECRETLY USING ITS TECHNOLOGY TO ADVANCE HIS FINANCIAL EMPIRE.

THE OCCUPANT OF THE CRAFT WAS NEVER FOUND. EXCEPT FOR A FEW MINUTE TRACES OF HIS DNA.



SIMPLE SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY LED LUTHOR TO MAP A SYNTHETIC GENE...

...BUT THAT CHANGED WHEN THE FIRST CLONE PROVED TO BE A BIZARRE SUPER-MAN.

MINDLESS. SOULLESS. YET POSSESSING GOD-LIKE POWERS.

LUTHOR BECAME OBSESSED WITH DEVISING A PROCESS TO GRAFT THE DNA TO HIMSELF.

BUT, FEARING THE CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH A RADICAL PROCEDURE, HE FIRST EXPERIMENTED ON HUMAN GUINEA PIGS.

THAT WAS HIS MISTAKE.



MY PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES WITH GENETIC MODIFICATION MUST HAVE MADE MY CELLS MORE RECEPTIVE TO THE GRAFT...

BECAUSE IN MY CASE ALONE, THE EXPERIMENT WAS A COMPLETE SUCCESS.



OF THE FEW OTHERS THAT SURVIVED THE GRAFT, ALL WERE HIDEOUSLY MUTATED...

...AND EVENTUALLY DIED.



WHY DO YOU REFER TO YOURSELF IN THE THIRD PERSON?

KRYPTO WAS THE LAST.

NOW THERE IS ONLY JIMMY.

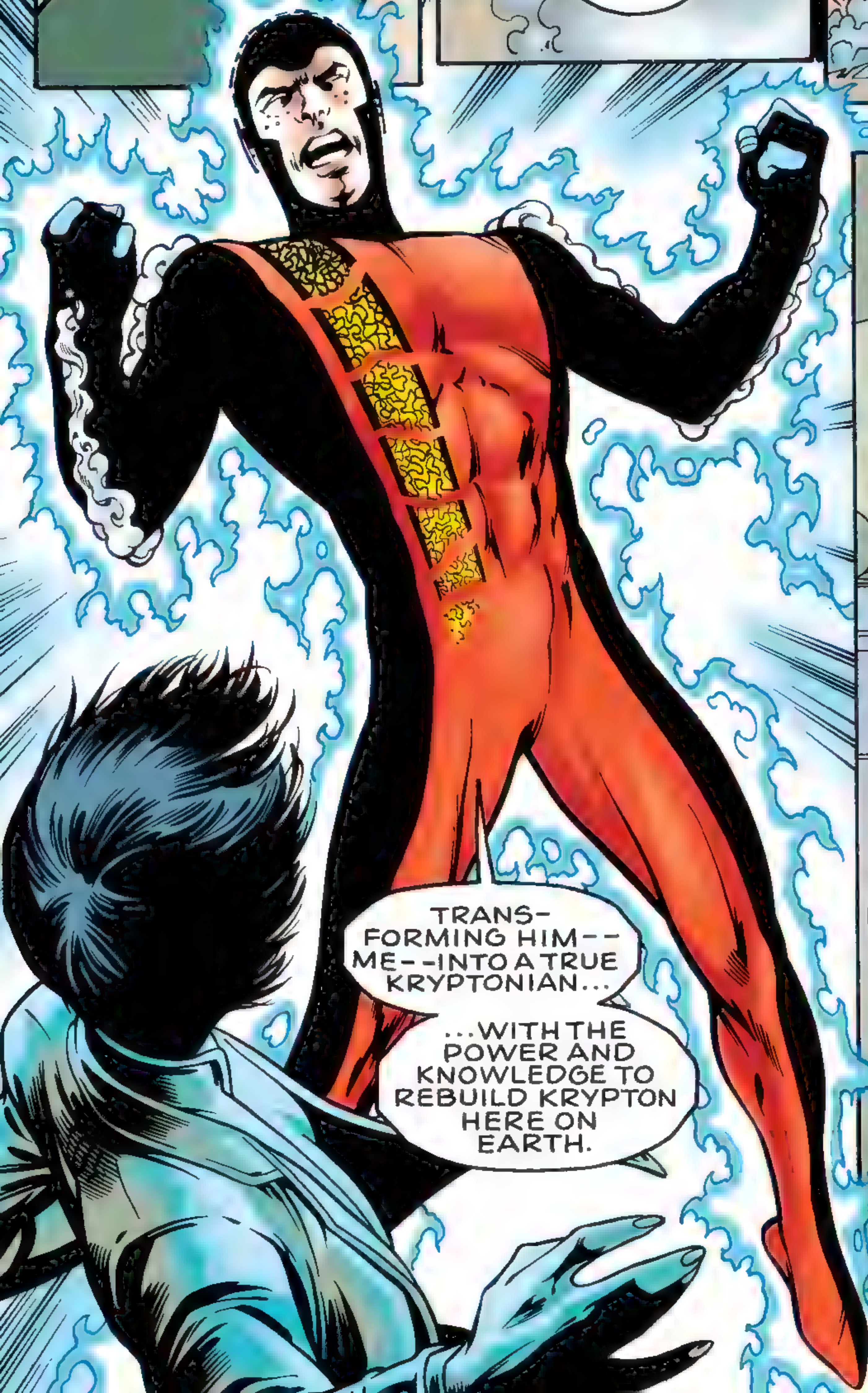


THE JIMMY OLSEN YOU KNEW NO LONGER EXISTS.

THE DNA GRAFT DID NOT MERELY REWRITE HIS PHYSICAL MAKEUP...



...BUT ALSO HIS *PSYCHOLOGY*. TO PREPARE HIM TO ABSORB THE RACE MEMORIES OF KRYPTON.



TRANSFORMING HIM--ME--INTO A TRUE KRYPTONIAN...

...WITH THE POWER AND KNOWLEDGE TO REBUILD KRYPTON HERE ON EARTH.



HOW, IF YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE?

JIMMY CANNOT BE UNIQUE.

THAT'S THE REAL REASON FOR THE PUBLIC DNA TESTS?



METAHUMANS. THE PUBLIC. ALL LIFE ON EARTH, FROM THE MOST REMOTE JUNGLE TO DEEPEST OCEAN.

IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL A STABLE GENETIC TEMPLATE CAN BE MANUFACTURED.

WHO WILL STOP ME? EARTH IS ISOLATED WITH A PLANETARY FORCE FIELD...

...AND ALL TERRESTRIAL OPPOSITION HAS BEEN NEUTRALIZED.

A.R.F. SECURITY BREACH IN PROGRESS.

AND THEN WHAT HAPPENS TO THE REST OF MANKIND?

THOSE WHO ARE PREPARED TO SERVE WILL SURVIVE.

YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH IT.

IT'S BATMAN. HE HAS FREED THE JUSTICE LEAGUE.

HA HA! SO MUCH FOR YOUR FOOLPROOF PLAN.

DON'T LAUGH AT ME, LOIS! PLEASE, DON'T LAUGH.

PERRY DID. AND LUTHOR-- BUT THEY'RE NOT LAUGHING NOW-- AND YOU NEVER USED TO...

EVEN WHEN I WAS A LOWLY CUB PHOTOGRAPHER AT THE DAILY PLANET AND YOU WERE THE STAR REPORTER.

YOUR LAST GREAT SCOOP, AN EXCLUSIVE. THE BEST EVER.

"THE DEATH OF THE JLA!"

BUT THEN, YOU HAVE NO CONCEPT OF HOW POWERFUL I HAVE BECOME.

IT'S TIME TO GIVE YOU A DEMONSTRATION.

DAILY PLANET

SMALLVILLE.

THE LIBERATORS ARE INCREDIBLY POWERFUL BUT ONLY FOR A SHORT TIME. SUSTAINED ACTIVITY BURNS THEM OUT.

IT'S A BASIC MOLECULAR INSTABILITY. ANY DAMAGE CAUSES A CHAIN REACTION AND THEY DISINTEGRATE.

EVIDENTLY THEY WERE CREATED TO POLICE AND INTIMIDATE ORDINARY PEOPLE...

...NOT TO ENGAGE IN PROLONGED BATTLES WITH METAHUMANS.

YES. THEY ALWAYS RELIED ON A SNEAK ATTACK...

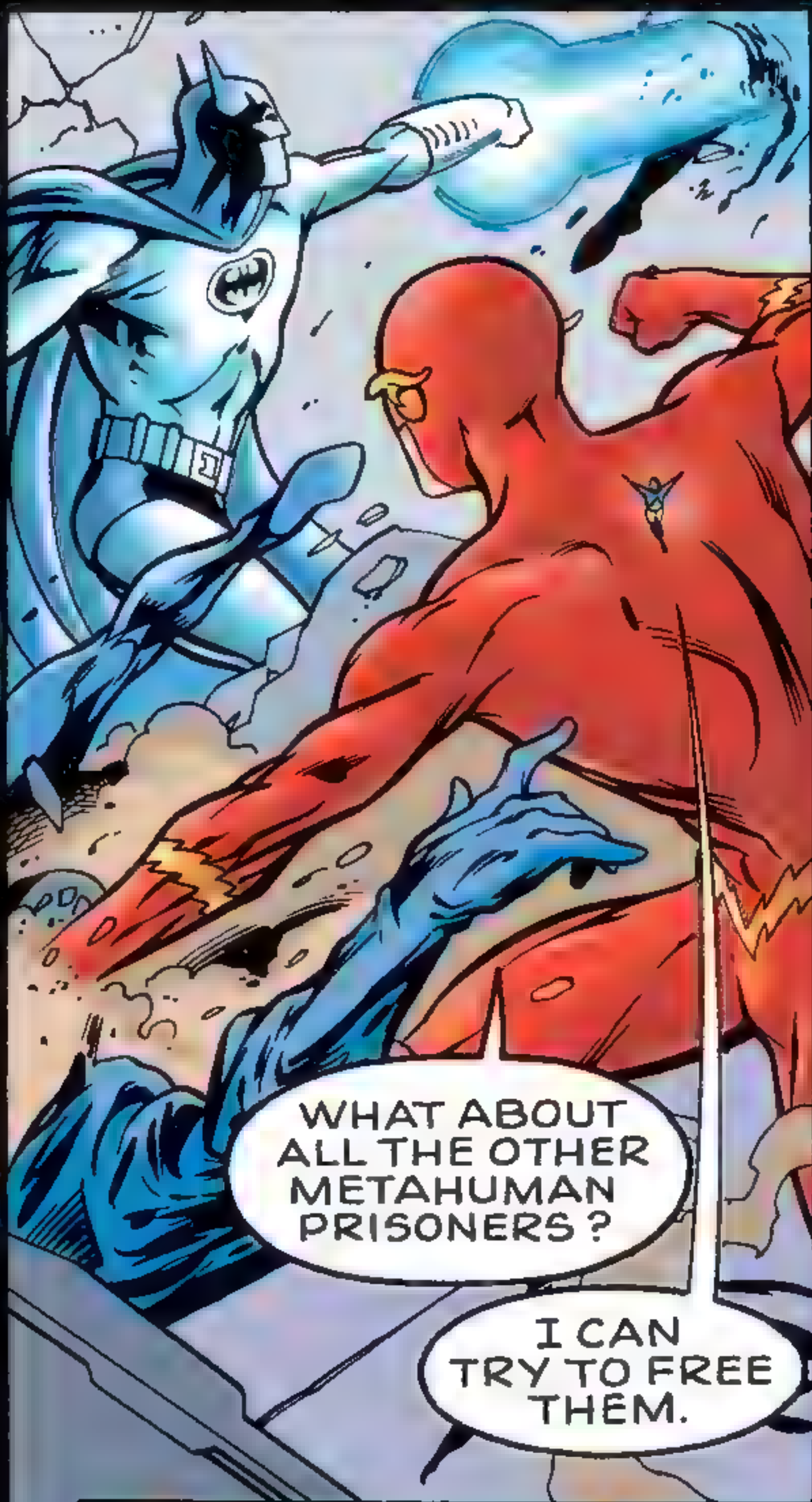
...MUCH LIKE THESE ARMORED STORM TROOPERS WHO JOIN THE FRAY.

THEY ARE JUST THUGS WITH HIGH-POWERED ENERGY WEAPONS.

THEY HAVE US CORNERED HERE...

...AND THEIR INDISCRIMINATE BLASTS WILL BRING THE BUILDING DOWN.

WE HAD BETTER TAKE THE FIGHT OUTSIDE.



WHAT ABOUT ALL THE OTHER METAHUMAN PRISONERS?

I CAN TRY TO FREE THEM.

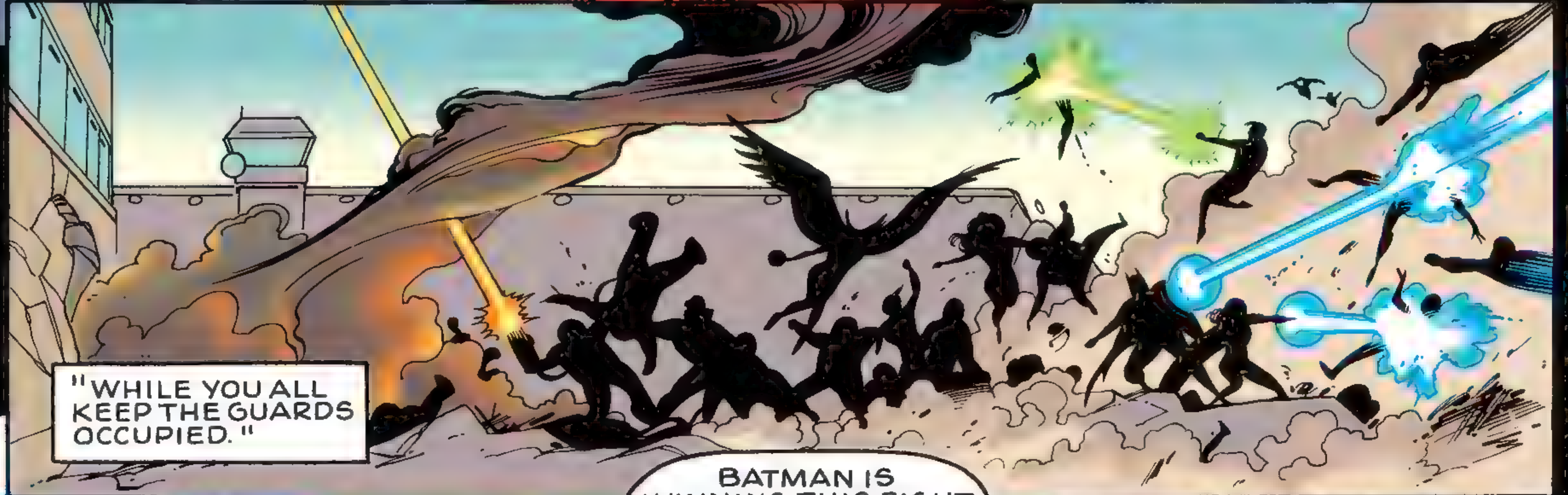


I'M NO USE HERE. IT'S TAKING ALL MY TIME TO AVOID GETTING HIT.

GIVE ME A BOOST UP TO THAT VENT AND I'LL DO MY THING.



I'LL HAVE A BETTER CHANCE CRACKING THIS PLACE'S SECURITY...



"WHILE YOU ALL KEEP THE GUARDS OCCUPIED."



BATMAN IS WINNING THIS FIGHT SINGLE-HANDED, AQUAMAN...

...HE FIGHTS LIKE A DEMON.

YES. I AM GLAD HE IS ON OUR SIDE, HAWK-WOMAN...



...BUT ANTICIPATION OF VICTORY IS PREMATURE. WE HAVE YET TO ENCOUNTER THE MASTER-MIND.



MASTERMIND
IS A TAD FORMAL,
FISHMAN.

A SIMPLE,
MASTER
WILL DO.



OLSEN, I
REMEMBER
YOU.

YOU
WERE
ELASTIC
LAD.



I WAS.

BUT
NOW I'M MORE
POWERFUL THAN
ALL OF YOU
TOGETHER.



I'LL BET
YOU WISH YOU'D
LET ME JOIN THE
LEAGUE.

IS THAT
WHY YOU SOLD
OUT TO THE
ENEMY?



TO
PUNISH
US FOR
REJECTING
YOU?



NO, THAT'S
JUST A PERK
OF DOMINATING
THE EARTH.

KKRAA!!



CLEARLY
YOU HAVE GROWN
TOO POWERFUL TO
BE SHOWN
MERCY.

NOR
DO YOU
DESERVE
ANY.

YOU HAVE
BETRAYED YOUR
COUNTRY. ALL OF
HUMANITY.

YOU
WILL NOT
WIN!

DID YOU NOT
SEE HOW EASILY
I TURNED MAN-
KIND AGAINST
YOU?

THEY
REALLY
ARE NOT
WORTH
SAVING.

GNAH!

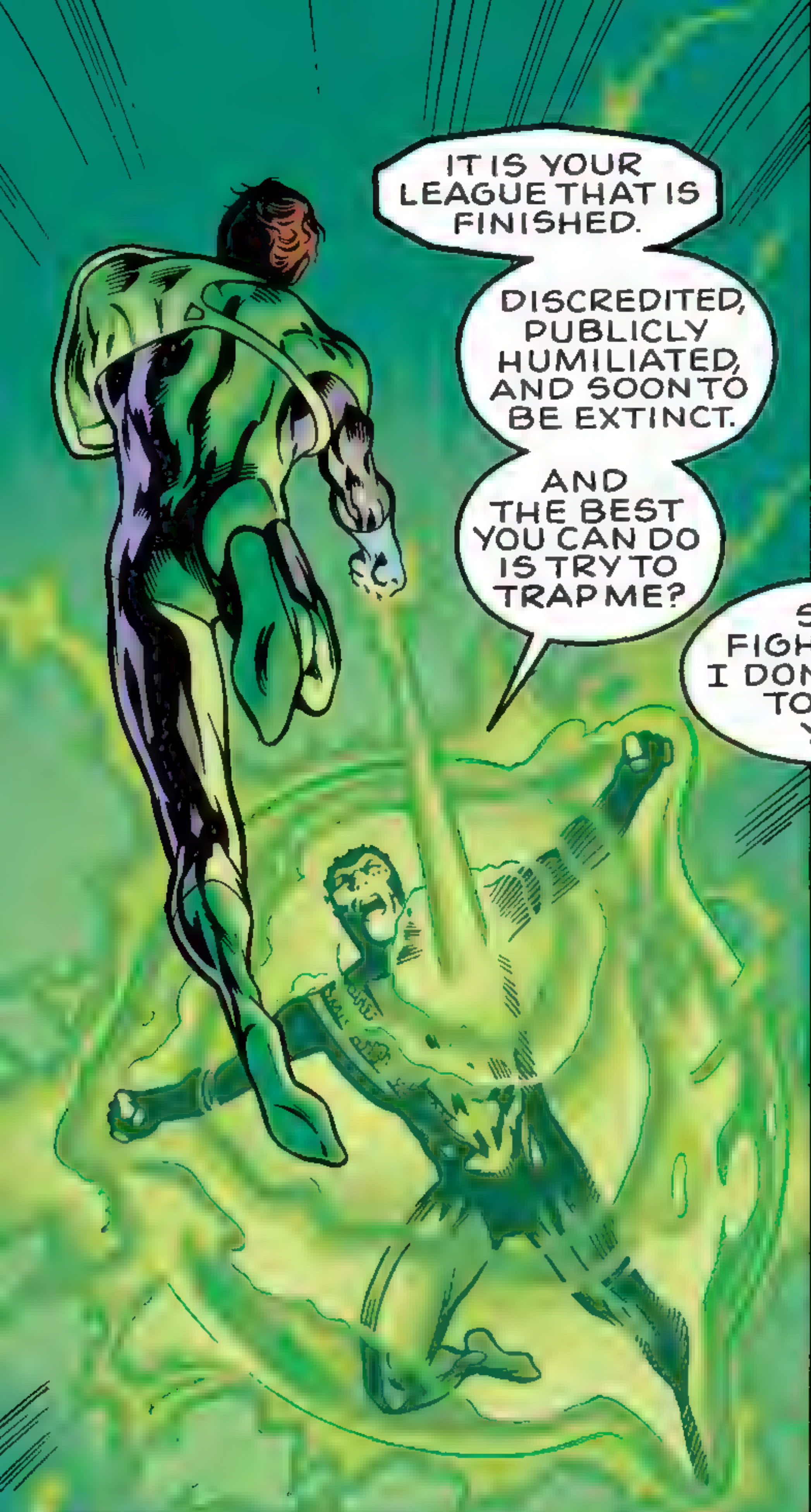
HOW
SAD. YOU'RE
STILL TRYING
TO SOUND LIKE
THE CHAMPION
OF TRUTH AND
JUSTICE.

YOU HAVEN'T WON YET,
OLSEN. THE FACILITY'S
GUARDS ARE BEATEN
OR RUNNING
SCARED...

...AND
ALL OF THE
LIBERATORS
HAVE BEEN
DESTROYED.

THEY'RE
DISPOSABLE.
I CAN GROW
MORE.



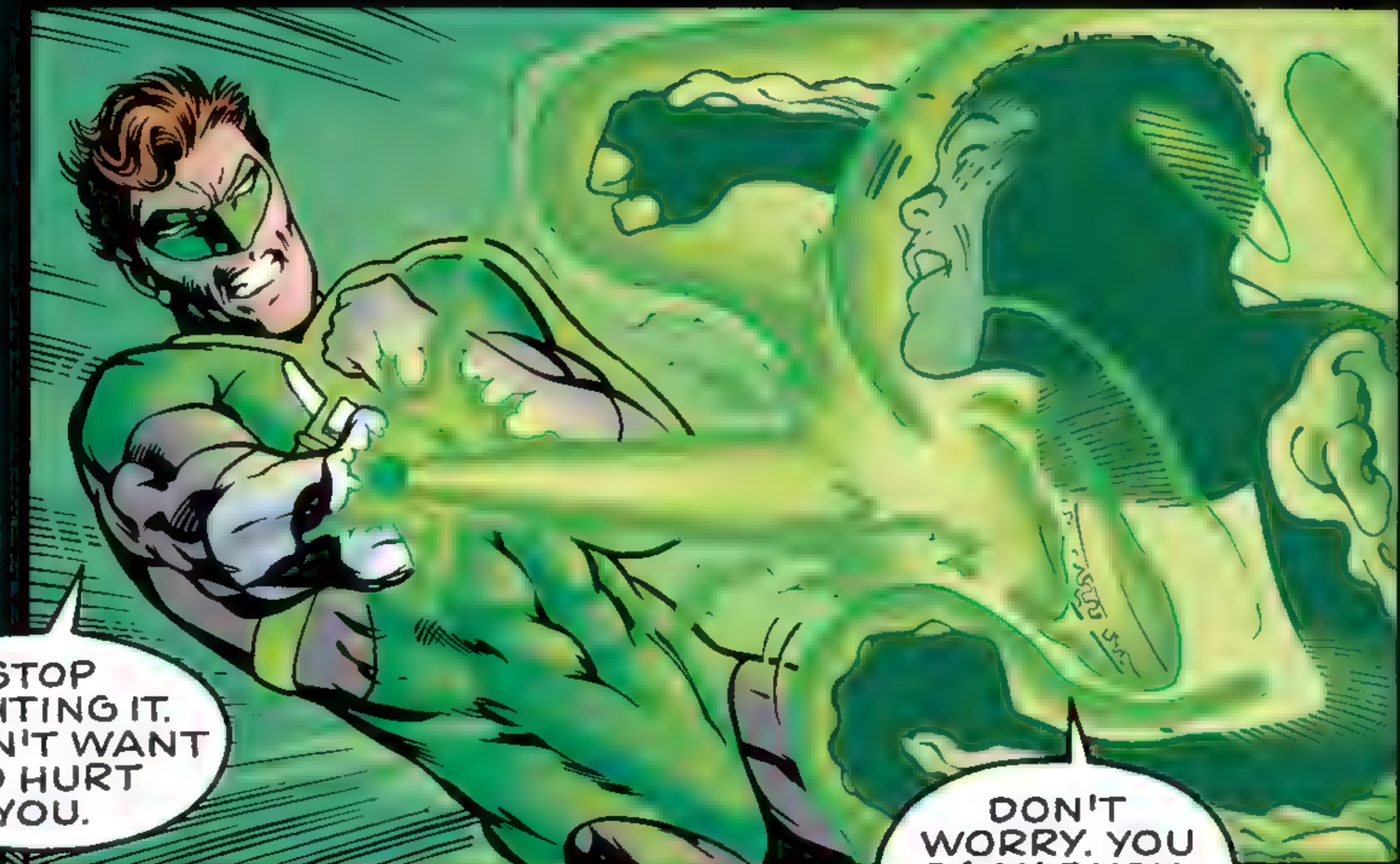


IT IS YOUR LEAGUE THAT IS FINISHED.

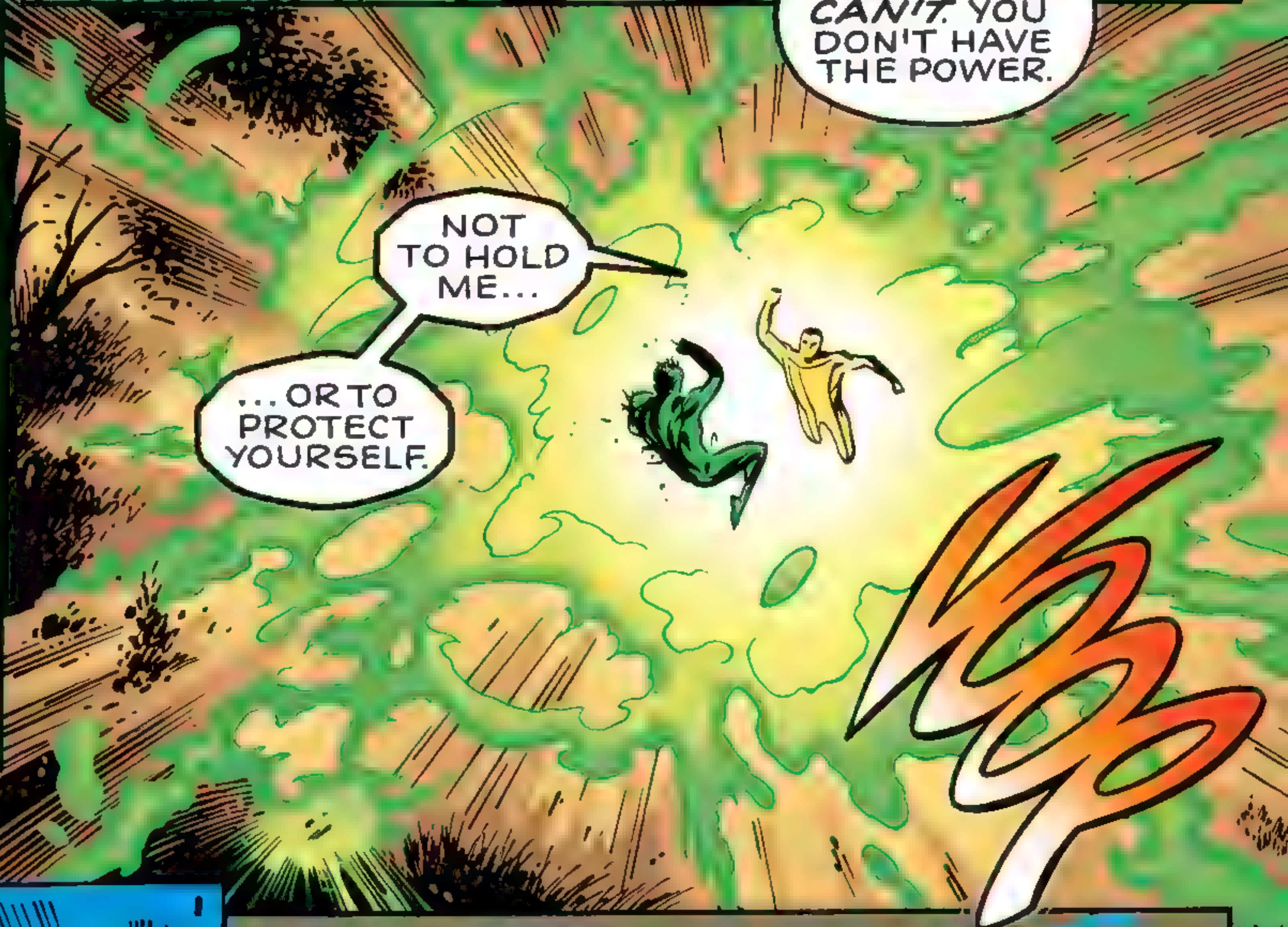
DISCREDITED, PUBLICLY HUMILIATED, AND SOON TO BE EXTINCT.

AND THE BEST YOU CAN DO IS TRY TO TRAP ME?

STOP FIGHTING IT. I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU.



DON'T WORRY. YOU *CAN'T*. YOU DON'T HAVE THE POWER.



NOT TO HOLD ME...

...OR TO PROTECT YOURSELF.



HA! BATTERED, BRUISED AND BROKEN...

...ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST.



THAT WAS A WARNING SHOT, OLSEN...



...THE NEXT ONE WON'T MISS.

BATMAN... AND A *NEW* SIDEKICK. WHO IS IT THIS TIME, *BATWOMAN*?

SEEMS LIKE *ANYONE* CAN BE YOUR SIDE-KICK, *EXCEPT* JIMMY.

YOU THOUGHT ELASTIC LAD WAS A JOKE.



LET'S SEE WHO HAS THE LAST LAUGH.

NO!

I WARNED YOU! I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE I LET YOU HARM ANYONE ELSE!



HA HA HA...



YOU DIDN'T SERIOUSLY THINK I'D ARM THE JOKER WITH SOMETHING THAT COULD HURT ME?

THAT MANIAC WASN'T EVEN ABLE TO KILL YOU.



BUT HE KNEW HOW TO TREAT YOUR SIDEKICKS.

A'EEEEEE!!



NO! LET HER GO.

MAYBE YOU DIDN'T NOTICE. I'M INVULNERABLE.



YOUR FEEBLE HUMAN FISTS CANNOT HURT ME.

YES, THEY CAN...



...WITH A
LITTLE RING
ASSIST.

YES,
LANTERN.
THAT GOT
HIM.



THEN,
COUGH FINISH
HIM...
QUICKLY.

I DON'T KNOW
HOW LONG I CAN
KEEP YOU SUPER-
CHARGED...

STRAIN'S
INCREDIBLE
COUGH... PAIN
Distracting--
FEEL FAINT...



STAY
WITH IT,
LANTERN,
YOU'RE
HURTING
HIM!

YEAH,
COUGH... BUT
OLSEN IS SO
STRONG...

AND
THE RING
COUGH--

--- ALMOST
DRAINED...



PROJECTED
EVERY LAST
IOTA... OF
ENERGY INTO
BATMAN...







YOU'RE HIM.
KALEL!

KALEL?!

YES, THE LAST KRYPTONIAN.

I CAN SEE YOUR RESEMBLANCE TO THE BIZARRO CLONES. I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD.

MY AGENTS SPENT YEARS TRYING TO LOCATE YOU. BUT NEVER HERE... ON AN AMISH FARM!



YOU WERE EXPECTED TO SECURE A POSITION OF POWER.

ANYWAY, I'VE TAKEN CARE OF THAT. AND NOW THAT I'VE FOUND YOU WE CAN JOIN FORCES.

NEVER.



BUT... WE SHARE THE SAME DNA. WE'RE VIRTUALLY BROTHERS.

WHAT YOU SAY MAY BE TRUE. BUT I AM NOT LIKE YOU.



YOU ARE. YOU MUST KNOW YOU AREN'T HUMAN.

IT IS YOUR HERITAGE TO RULE THE EARTH.

NO!

LIE STILL. YOUR INJURIES ARE SEVERE.



DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME.

IF YOU HAVE THE POWER TO STOP OLSEN...

...DO IT.



STAND BACK, KAL EL.

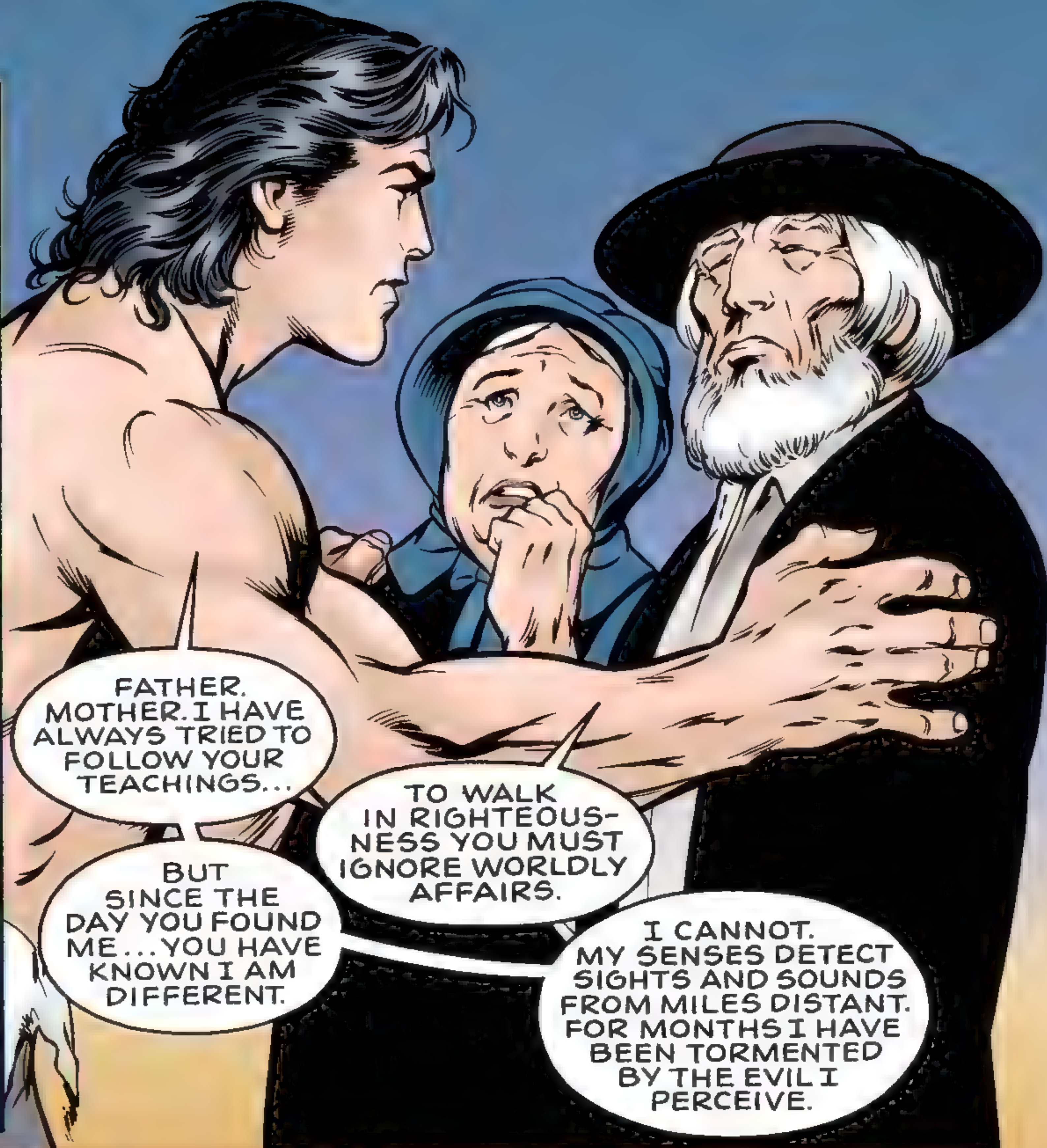
ARE YOU GOING TO STOP ME?

NO.

YES.

LET ME PUT THE CAPED CRUSADER OUT OF HIS MISERY.

NO, SON. THESE ARE NOT OUR WAYS.



FATHER. MOTHER. I HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO FOLLOW YOUR TEACHINGS...

BUT SINCE THE DAY YOU FOUND ME... YOU HAVE KNOWN I AM DIFFERENT.

TO WALK IN RIGHTEOUSNESS YOU MUST IGNORE WORLDLY AFFAIRS.

I CANNOT. MY SENSES DETECT SIGHTS AND SOUNDS FROM MILES DISTANT. FOR MONTHS I HAVE BEEN TORMENTED BY THE EVIL I PERCEIVE.



ALWAYS PRAYING THAT OTHERS MIGHT STOP THIS MONSTER. I CAN DENY MY CONSCIENCE NO LONGER.

HOLD ON, KAL. THESE SUPERSTITIOUS PEASANTS HAVE GOT YOU BRAINWASHED.

COME AWAY FROM HIM, SON. I BEG YOU.



THIS IS TEDIOUS.

POW!



AW, C'MON, KAL...

THIS PRIMITIVE SPECIES IS UNWORTHY OF YOUR EMOTIONAL AFFILIATION.

NO...NO...



YOU
HAVE BEEN
CONTAMINATED
BY THE PRIMITIVE
HUMAN
PASSIONS.

YOU ARE NOT
WORTHY OF NEW
KRYPTON.

I DON'T
NEED YOU.
ONLY YOUR
DNA...



...AND I
CAN TAKE THAT
FROM YOUR
CORPSE.

THUD



YOU
REALLY ARE
PATHETIC,
KAL.

YOU'VE
DENIED YOUR
POWERS FOR SO
LONG, YOU DON'T
KNOW HOW TO
USE THEM.



OLSEN AND KALEL ARE TOO POWERFUL.

THERE IS NOTHING ELSE WE CAN DO.

THE CONCUSSIVE FORCE OF EVERY BLOW IS LIKE A BOMB BLAST...

HELP ME GET THESE CIVILIANS BACK, SELINA.

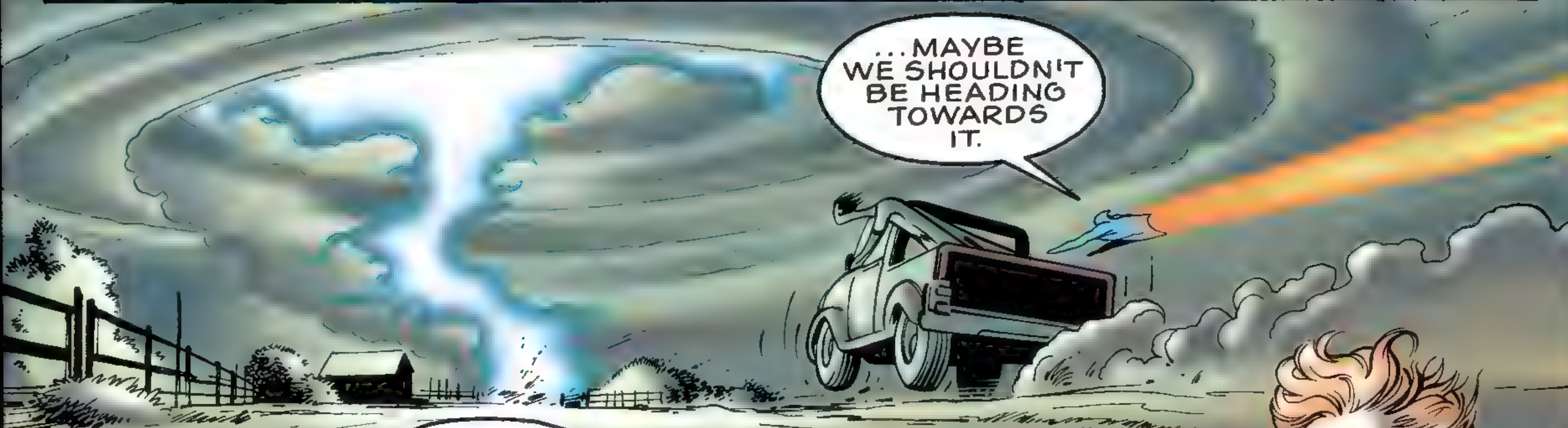
BRUCE. OH LORD. BRUCE.



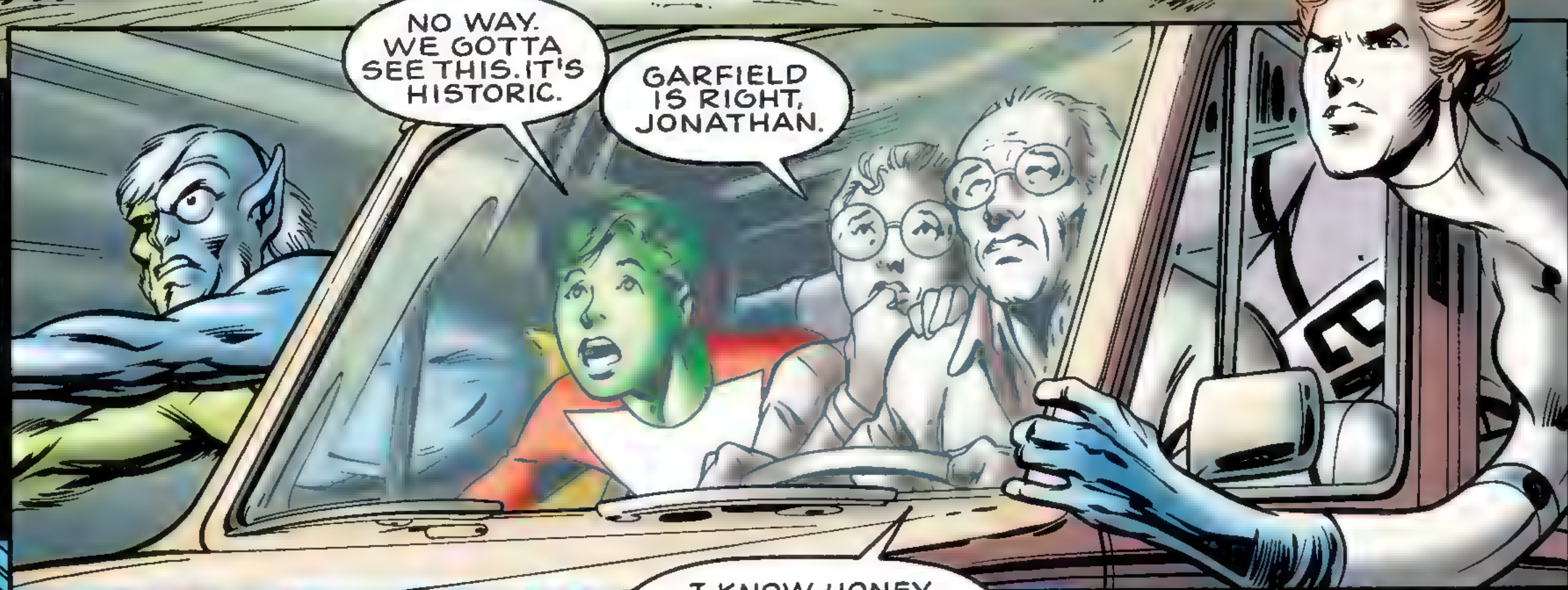
"...AND THE
INTENSITY IS
ESCALATING."



"IT'S LIKE A HURRICANE AND EARTHQUAKE COMBINED..."



...MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T BE HEADING TOWARDS IT.



NO WAY. WE GOTTA SEE THIS. IT'S HISTORIC.

GARFIELD IS RIGHT, JONATHAN.



I KNOW, HONEY. YOU ALWAYS SAID WE WERE DESTINED TO BE PART OF SOMETHING MOMENTOUS.

LET'S JUST HOPE IT ISN'T ARMAGEDDON.



HUH...

WHAT'S WRONG?

ΔΔ CANNOT Δ-FEEL ΔΔ.



NO...
NOOOO!

ø-ø&Δ

NOOO!!

OLSEN HAS
BURNT OUT
...LIKE THE
LIBERATORS.



JIMMY
WAS WRONG.
HIS DNA GRAFT
NEVER FULLY
FUSED.

THAT'S WHY
THE KRYPTONIAN
CONQUEROR WAS SO
EAGER TO IMPRESS
ME AND HUMILIATE
THE JUSTICE
LEAGUE.



I CAN'T
FAIL.

- ø PLAN ΔOO
FLAWLESS. I øø
SUPERIOR.

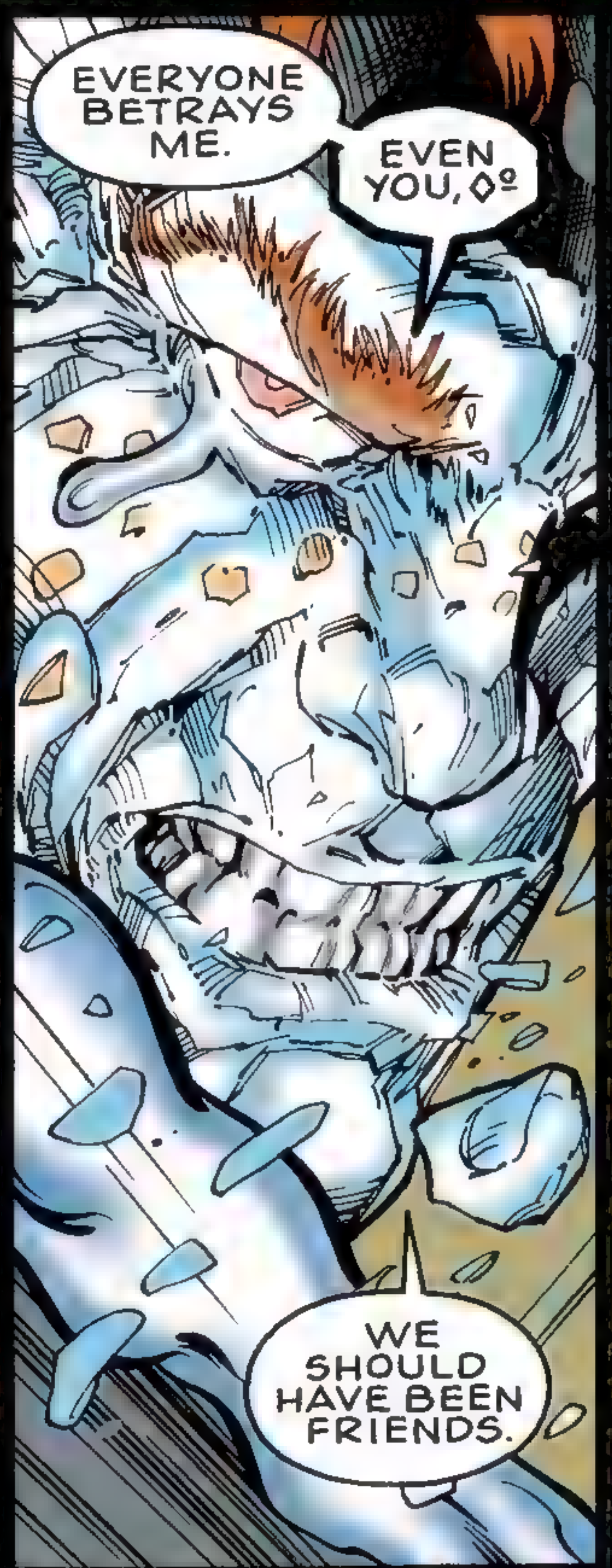
IT'S NOT
FAIR.

PLEASE
STOP. THE
JUSTICE LEAGUE
MAY BE ABLE
TO HELP
YOU.



NO. THEY
HATE ME.

THEY
ALWAYS
HAVE.

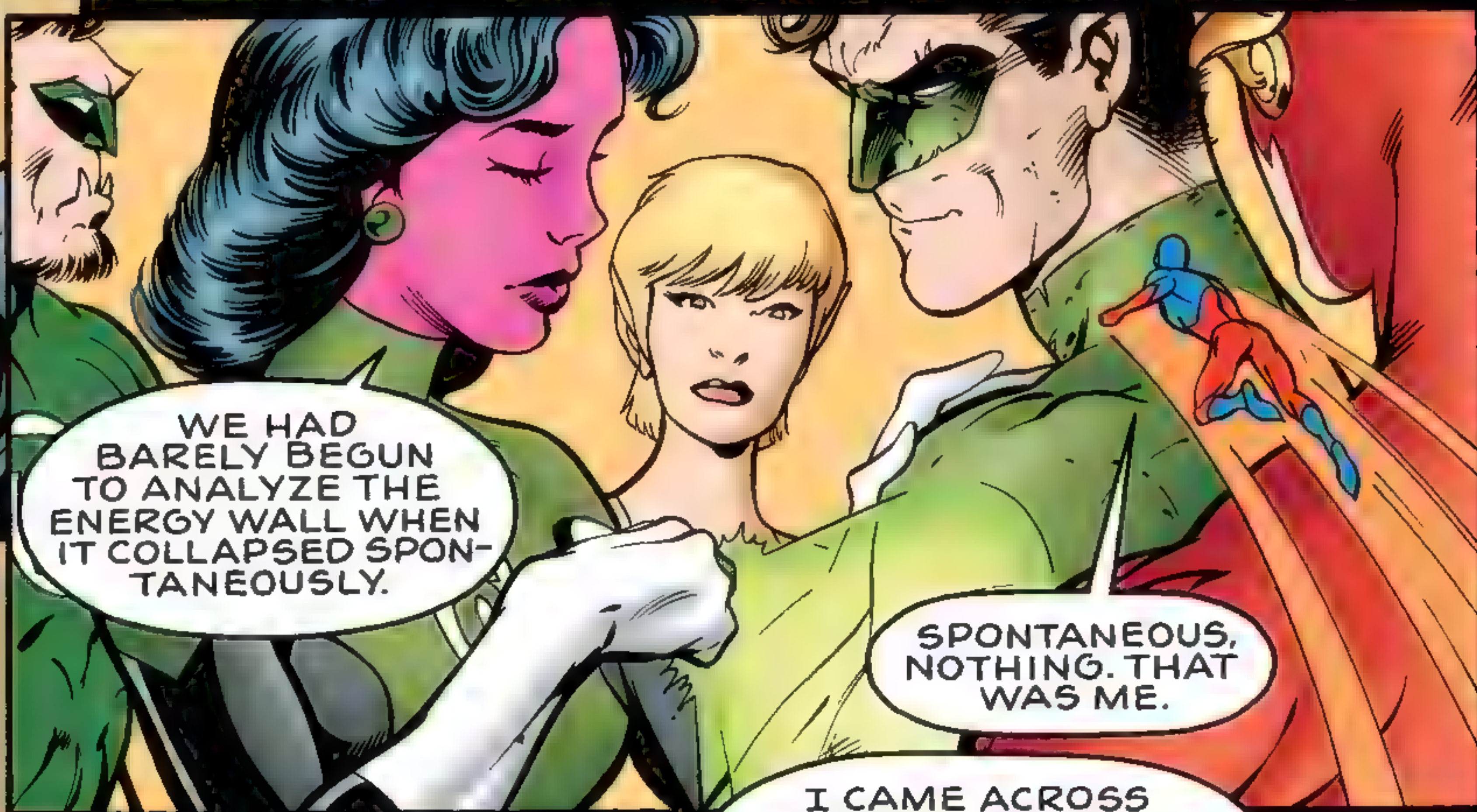


EVERYONE
BETRAYS
ME.

EVEN
YOU, øø

WE
SHOULD
HAVE BEEN
FRIENDS.







IT WAS HIS DNA THAT MADE JIMMY EVIL. BATMAN. CAN WE TRUST HIM?

I THINK SO.

IS THAT HOPE? OR FAITH?

EXPERIENCE.



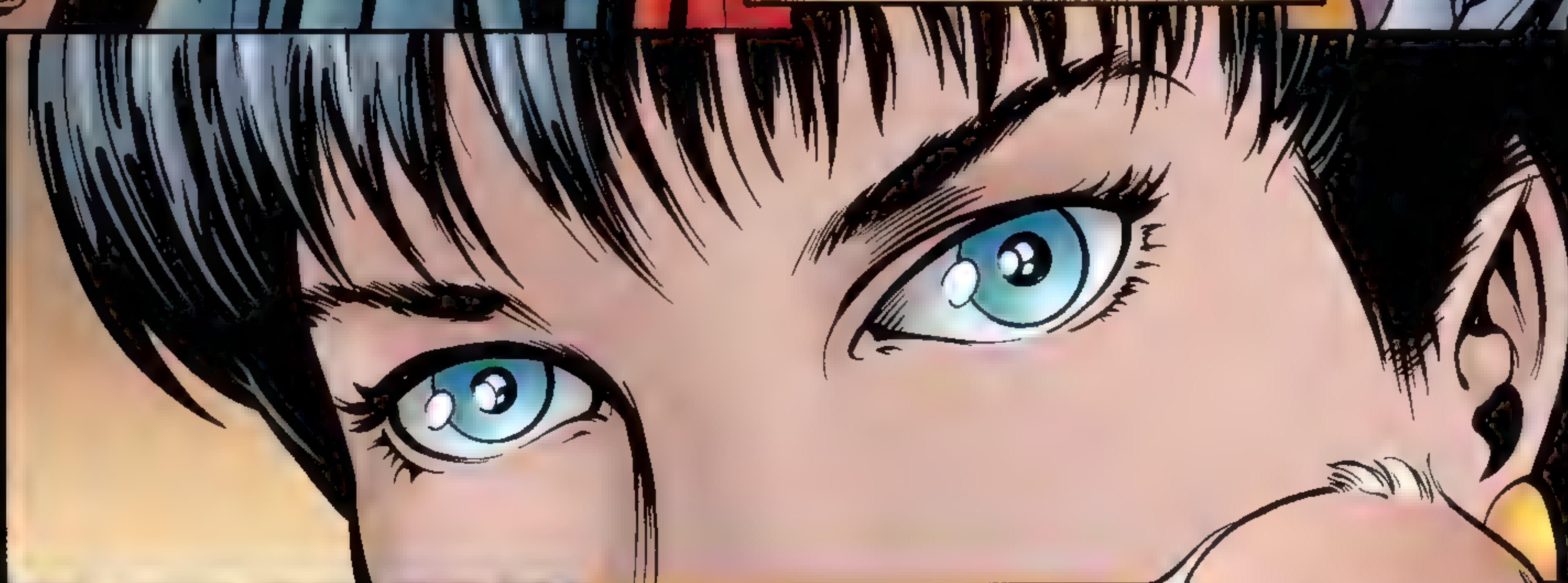
WHATEVER ELSE HAPPENED TO OLSEN, HE WAS ALREADY BITTER, ANGRY--EASILY CORRUPTED BY POWER.



KAL EL NEVER WANTED POWER.

HE WOULD GIVE IT ALL UP TO BRING HIS PARENTS BACK FOR A SINGLE MINUTE.

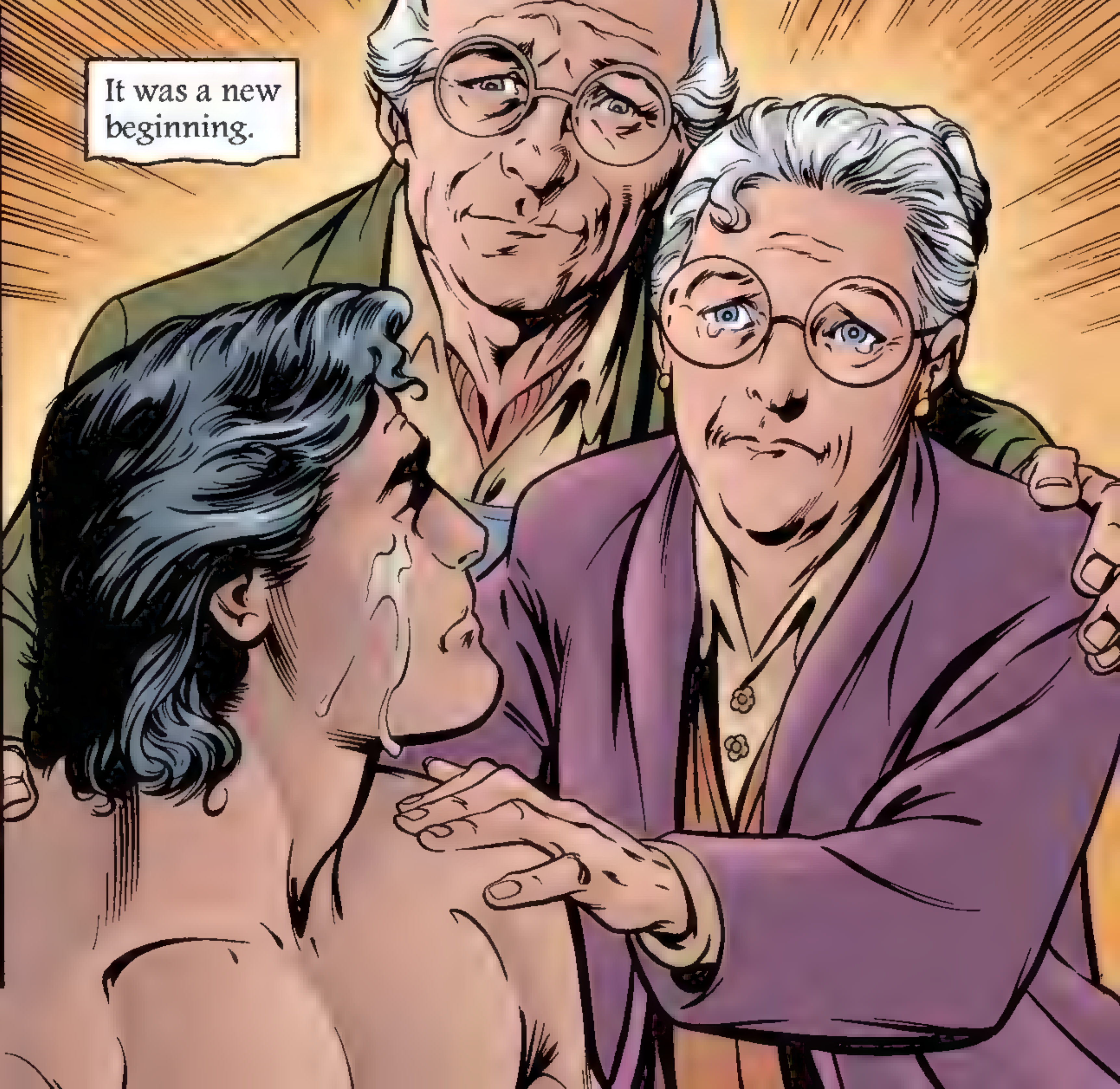
THAT'S WHY HE WILL BE THE GREATEST CHAMPION OF ALL.



I didn't know then how right Batman was.



This wasn't an ending.



It was a new beginning.

Jimmy had promised me an exclusive. The best ever. And it was.

But some stories are better left untold.

Batman surrendered himself to the Gotham City police and was tried for killing the Joker.

The Courts ruled the death was an act of war -- Batman never forgave himself.

He resigned from the JLA and although he continues to fight crime, his crusade has become a self-imposed penance.

Still, with Catwoman at his side, perhaps his life is a little less dark now.

The Kents, with their big hearts and easy acceptance of the bizarre, made an immediate connection with Kal El.

They helped him come to terms with what had happened, what he was and what he could become.

They insisted on maintaining their anonymity so the world has never discovered what it owes the Kents...

... Though dozens of meta-humans continue to secretly honor them, and Lana Lang, as their saviors.

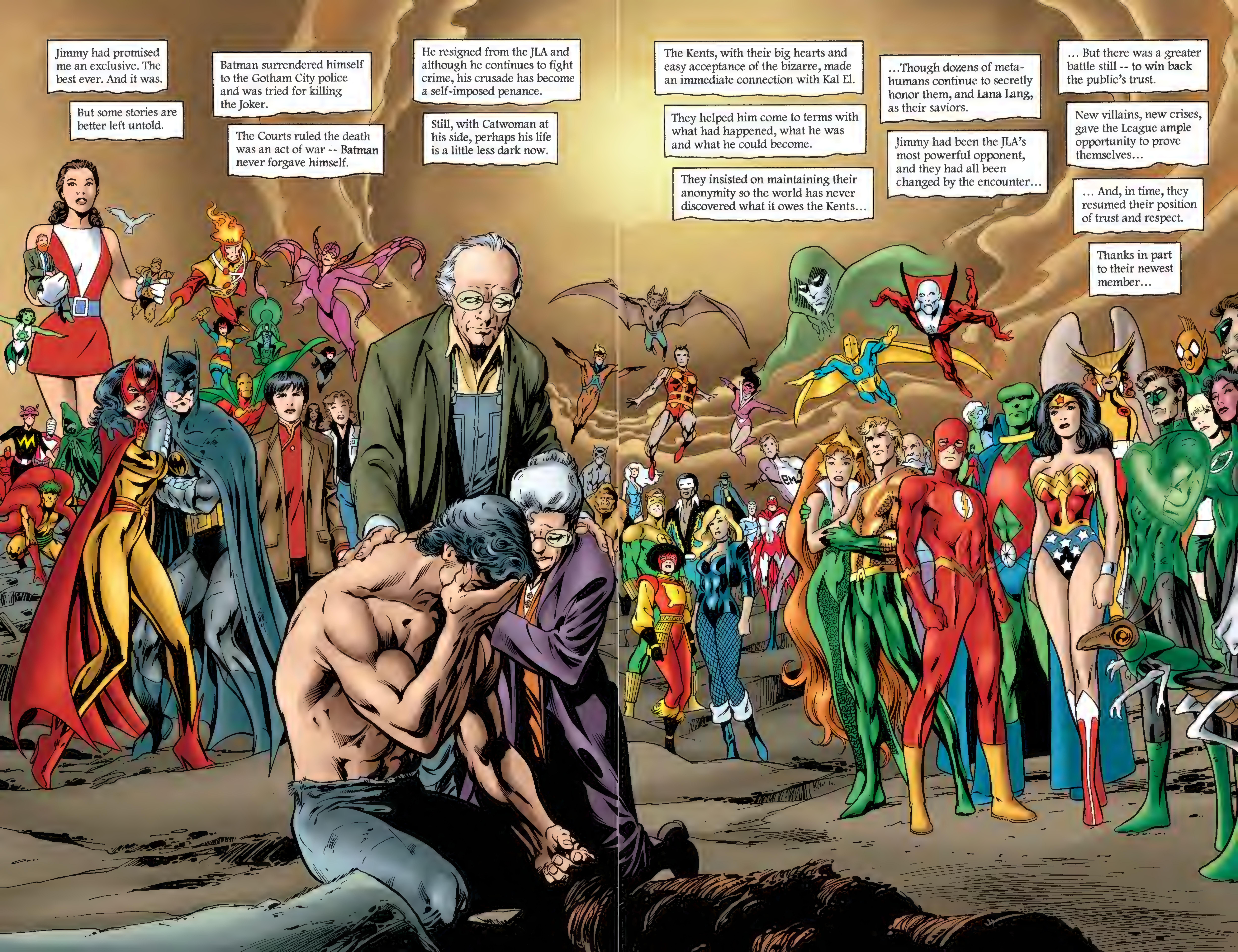
Jimmy had been the JLA's most powerful opponent, and they had all been changed by the encounter...

... But there was a greater battle still -- to win back the public's trust.

New villains, new crises, gave the League ample opportunity to prove themselves...

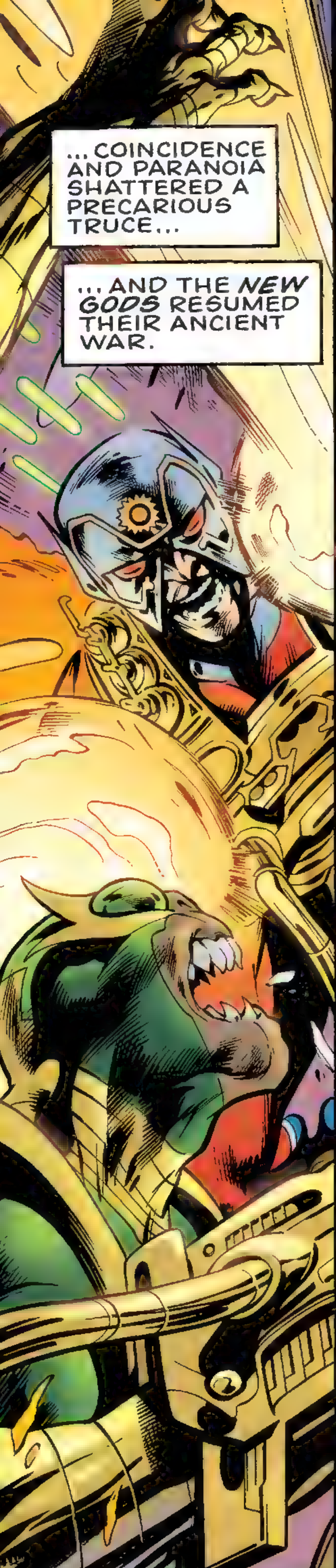
... And, in time, they resumed their position of trust and respect.

Thanks in part to their newest member...



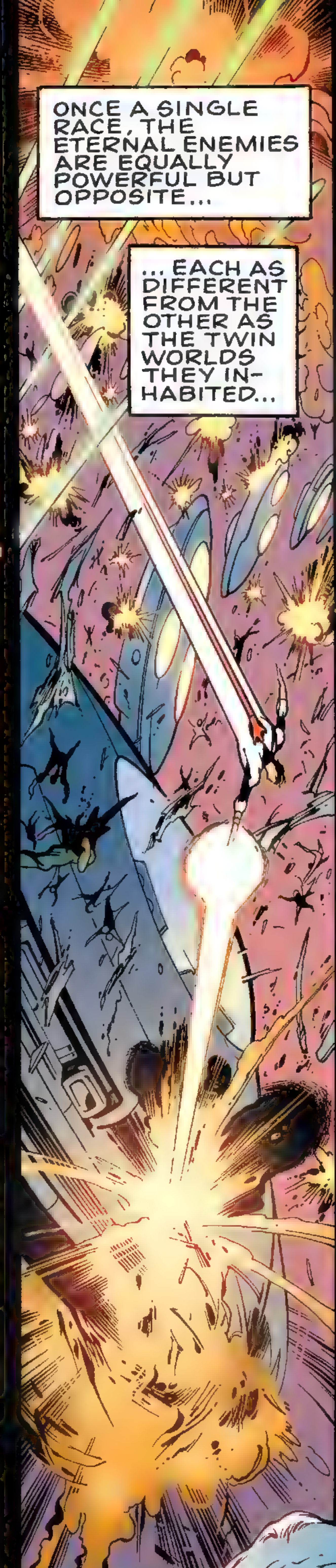


...They call
him Superman.



... COINCIDENCE
AND PARANOIA
SHATTERED A
PRECARIOUS
TRUCE...

... AND THE *NEW*
GODS RESUMED
THEIR ANCIENT
WAR.



ONCE A SINGLE
RACE, THE
ETERNAL ENEMIES
ARE EQUALLY
POWERFUL BUT
OPPOSITE...

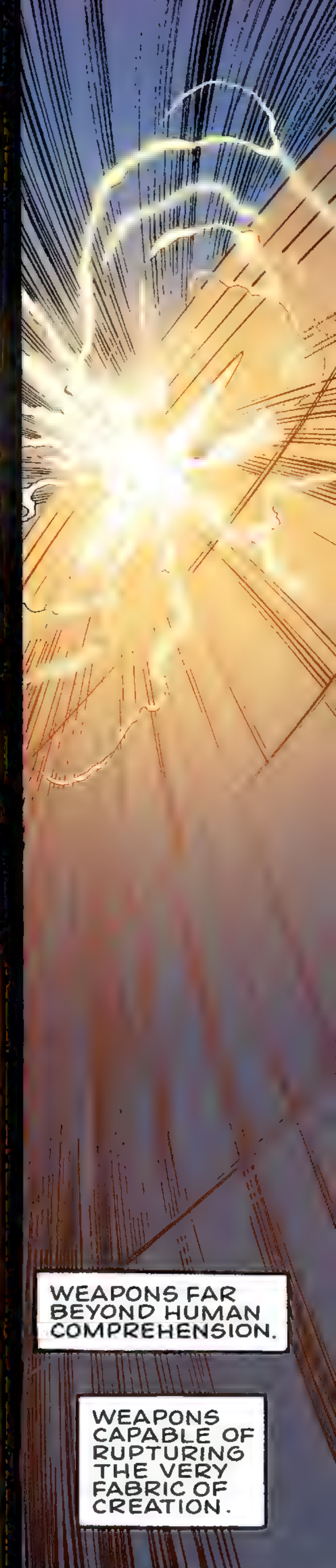
... EACH AS
DIFFERENT
FROM THE
OTHER AS
THE TWIN
WORLDS
THEY IN-
HABITED...



... BRIGHT,
HALLOWED
NEW
GENESIS...

... AND DARK,
DAMNED
APOKOLIPS.

THE CONFLICT
RAPIDLY ESCA-
LATED AS THE
NEW GODS UN-
LEASHED WEAPONS
THAT PROVED
THEIR NAME WAS
NO EMPTY BOAST.



WEAPONS FAR
BEYOND HUMAN
COMPREHENSION.

WEAPONS
CAPABLE OF
RUPTURING
THE VERY
FABRIC OF
CREATION.



HALF A GALAXY AWAY,
THE *GUARDIANS OF THE UNIVERSE*
WATCHED.

THEY HAD LONG
REMAINED NEUTRAL
IN THE AFFAIRS OF
THE NEW GODS...

... BUT AS THE SUBSPACE
DEVASTATION BEGAN TO
SPREAD FAR BEYOND
THE WAR ZONE...


... THE GUARDIANS DISPATCHED THE **GREEN LANTERN CORPS** TO PROTECT THE WORLDS BORDERING NEW GOD SPACE.

GRAVITY STORMS, SOLAR FLUX, TECTONIC DISRUPTION, COMETS AND ASTEROIDS THROWN FROM THEIR ORBITS -- THE POTENTIAL SCOPE OF TRAGEDY WAS ALL TOO CLEAR.

DIVIDED INTO SQUADS AND TELEPATHICALLY COORDINATED FROM THE PLANET **OA**, THE CORPS PITTED THEMSELVES AGAINST THE STELLAR CARNAGE.

A MASSIVE ACHIEVEMENT IN ITSELF, THE CORPS WERE NEVER INTENDED TO OPERATE AS A UNIT.





ALL THREE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED GREEN LANTERNS ARE RECRUITED FROM THE SPECTRUM OF BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY ACROSS THE GALAXY...

...TO PROTECT AND SERVE THEIR OWN SECTOR OF SPACE...

... AND TO FOSTER AND PROMOTE THE GUARDIANS' DREAM OF UNIVERSAL HARMONY.

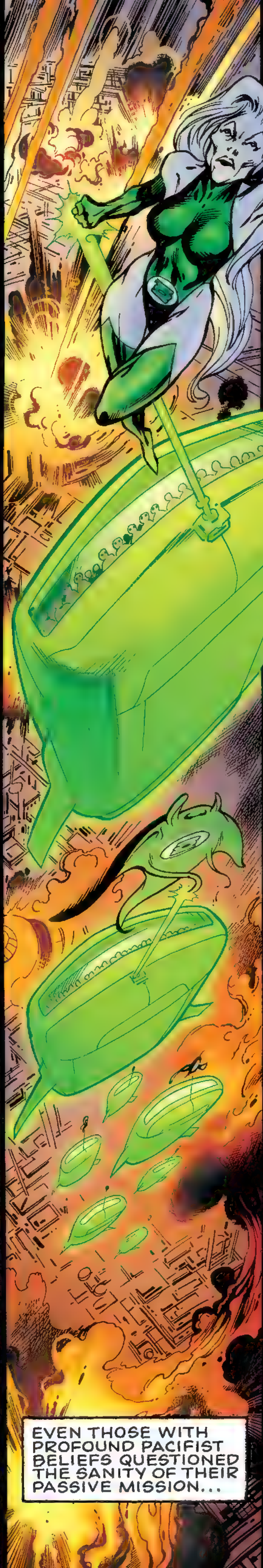
THE ONLY THING ALL GREEN LANTERNS HAVE IN COMMON IS THAT THE GUARDIANS JUDGED EACH WORTHY TO WEAR A POWER RING.

ENTRUSTING TO THEM A POTENTIAL THAT IS LIMITED ONLY BY THE IMAGINATION AND WILLPOWER OF THE WIELDER.

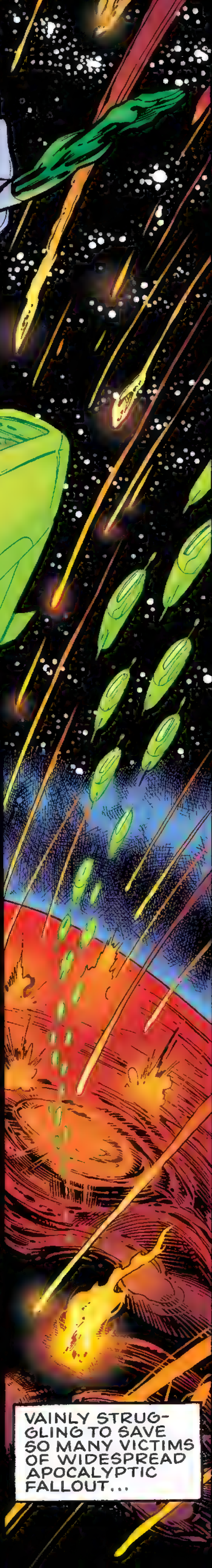


BUT AS THE CORPS
STRUGGLED TO STEM
THE TIDE OF COSMIC
TRAGEDY, THEY
BEGAN TO SHARE
SOMETHING ELSE...

A SENSE OF
FUTILITY.



EVEN THOSE WITH
PROFOUND PACIFIST
BELIEFS QUESTIONED
THE SANITY OF THEIR
PASSIVE MISSION...



VAINLY STRUG-
GLING TO SAVE
SO MANY VICTIMS
OF WIDESPREAD
APOCALYPTIC
FALLOUT...



...INSTEAD
OF TACKLING
THE CAUSE...

... DARKSEID,
LORD OF
APOKOLIPS.

NO MORE
LIES, MR. MIRACLE.
YOU WERE CAUGHT
TRESPASSING ON MY
WORLD MERE MOMENTS
AFTER A COLLAPSING
BOOM TUBE CAUSED
IRREPARABLE
DEVASTATION.

YOU, AN
AGENT OF NEW
GENESIS AND AN
ALLY OF THE META-
HUMAN CHAMPIONS
OF EARTH... THE
JLA --

THE JLA
DIDN'T ATTACK...
YOU PARANOID
NUT... IT WAS AN
ACCIDENT!

A FORCEFIELD
AROUND EARTH AN
"ACCIDENT"? ANSWER
TRUTHFULLY...

... OR
SUFFER!

MASTER, YOUR WORLD
IS SHATTERED, SPINNING
INTO THE SUN. YOUR
ARMIES ARE IN
DISARRAY.

WE... YOUR
WAR CABINET
BELIEVE ALL
IS LOST...

GGHHH!

... WE
SHOULD ABANDON
APOKOLIPS AND
REGROUP AT ONE
OF YOUR SECRET
OUTPOSTS.

YOUR RANK AND
POWER IS GRANTED
BY MY WHIM.

YOUR OPINION IS
IRRELEVANT-- MY
WILL IS ALL. BEFORE
I ADMIT DEFEAT, I
WILL DESTROY THE
ENTIRE UNIVERSE.

NEVER!

SNIVELING
FOOLS.

GAH!
HE'S DEAD.



NOT LIKE YOU
TO MISJUDGE THE
CAPACITY OF ONE
OF YOUR VICTIMS,
DESAAD.

IT
WAS AS IF
HE WILLED
HIMSELF
TO DIE.

HE
WAS NOT AS
STRONG AS HE
HAD BOASTED. HIS
BODY WAS STILL
VIABLE BUT HIS
MIND COULD NOT
ENDURE THE
THREAT OF
PAIN.

YOU HAD
BETTER HOPE
YOU ALL DIE
BEFORE I
GET YOU--

YOU
COWARDLY
CURS.

MY
HUSBAND
HAD MORE
SPIRIT THAN
ALL OF
YOU.

YOU
SHAME ME,
BARDA.



I EXPECTED
SCOTT FREE, A SON
OF NEW GENESIS, TO
BE SOFT, BUT, AS A NA-
TIVE OF APOKOLIPS, AND
ONE OF MY STUDENTS,
YOU SHOULD BE ABOVE
SUCH SICKENING
WEAKNESS.



IT IS NOT
WEAKNESS
TO LOVE...

BUT YOU WILL
NEVER UNDERSTAND,
YOU TREACHEROUS
CURS WHO TEAR AT
EACH OTHER LIKE
MAD DOGS.



THE GIRL
IS RIGHT.

IT WAS A
TRAITOR'S ACT
WHO DOOMED MY
PLANS...MY WORLD.
I CAN TRUST
NO ONE.

...BUT
I PREPARED
CONTINGENCIES
FOR EVERY
EVENTUALITY.

IT IS
TIME FOR
THE **OMEGA**
DOOM.

LIGHT-YEARS AWAY, ON A NAMELESS WORLD, ANOTHER RESCUE MISSION PROCEEDS AS SUBSPACE SHOCKWAVES AWAKEN VOLCANIC WRATH.

IT APPEARED TO BE A ROUTINE MISSION...

...UNTIL GREEN LANTERN 1732 SAW A GROUP OF DARKSEID'S PARADEMONS...

...ARRIVING THROUGH A BOOM TUBE.

SUSPICIOUS OF WHAT THEY ARE DOING SO FAR FROM THE BATTLE...

...1732 RECORDED THE EVENT AND MADE A FULL SPECTRUM SCAN OF A MACHINE THE PARADEMONS UNEARTHED...

...AND TRANSMITTED THE RING ANALYSIS TO OA.


THIS IS CLEARLY A COMPONENT OF A LARGER DEVICE.

DARKSEID EITHER DISPERSED THE PARTS OR HAD THEM MANUFACTURED REMOTELY TO PREVENT DETECTION.

THE EVIDENCE IS INCONTROVERTIBLE.


INDEED, THE DEVICE HAS A SINGULAR USE AND A TERRIFYING POTENTIAL.

DARKSEID MUST BE CONFRONTED.



IZAYA THE HIGHFATHER
HAD BEEN THE GREATEST
WARRIOR ON NEW GENESIS
UNTIL, SICKENED BY
ETERNAL WAR, HE FORSOOK
VIOLENCE AND BECAME A
LIVING SYMBOL OF PEACE.

BUT AS THE COSMIC WAR
RAGED ABOVE THE PARA-
DISE HE CREATED, IZAYA
BEGAN TO DESPAIR THAT
THERE COULD BE NO END
TO THE INSANITY.



NO WAY
TO BREAK
THE BLOODY
STALEMATE.


GUARDIAN?

HIGHFATHER!



A
DOOMSDAY
WEAPON.

WE
MUST ACT
QUICKLY.



DARKSEID'S
ARMIES CANNOT
HOPE TO WIN BUT
NEITHER WILL THEY
SURRENDER. THEY HAVE
BEEN CONDITIONED
TO KILL UNTIL THEY
ARE KILLED.

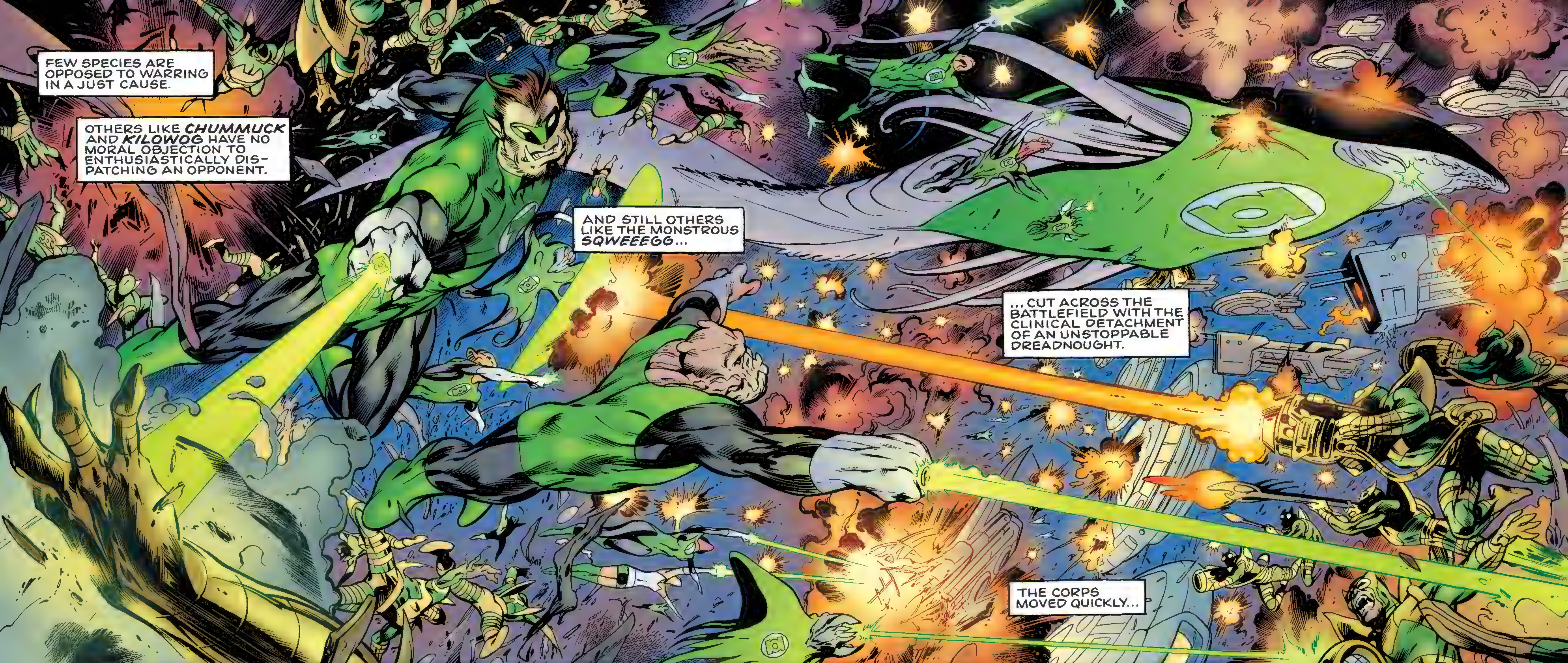
YOUR CORPS
ARE PREPARED
TO DIE FOR YOUR
CAUSE, BUT ARE
THEY PREPARED
TO KILL?



IT GOES AGAINST ALL
WE BELIEVE...

...BUT
EACH GREEN
LANTERN HAS
BEEN MADE
FULLY AWARE
OF WHAT IS
REQUIRED...

...AND
GIVEN THE
CHOICE TO BE
TRUE TO THEIR
OWN CON-
SCIENCE.




FEW SPECIES ARE
OPPOSED TO WARRING
IN A JUST CAUSE.

OTHERS LIKE **CHUMMUCK**
AND **KILOWOG** HAVE NO
MORAL OBJECTION TO
ENTHUSIASTICALLY DIS-
PATCHING AN OPPONENT.

AND STILL OTHERS
LIKE THE MONSTROUS
SQWEEEGG...


... CUT ACROSS THE
BATTLEFIELD WITH THE
CLINICAL DETACHMENT
OF AN UNSTOPPABLE
DREADNOUGHT.

THE CORPS
MOVED QUICKLY...



... UNTIL THEY COULD
JOIN FORCES WITH
THE HEAVY HITTERS
OF NEW GENESIS.

**ORION, LIGHTRAY
AND INFINITY...**



AND TOGETHER DRIVE
A WEDGE THROUGH THE
APOKOLIPS DEFENSE...




... DOWN TO
THE PLANET
ITSELF AND...




...INTO DARKSEID'S STRONGHOLD.

BEHOLD THE OMEGA DOOM.

ALREADY IT GROWS, FEEDING ON THE DYING WORLD BENEATH OUR FEET... AND WHEN IT REACHES CRITICAL MASS...



...APOKOLIPS, NEW GENESIS AND ALL MATTER FOR MILLIONS OF LIGHT-YEARS AROUND WILL BE INSTANTLY VAPORIZED.



JUST IN TIME, MASTER. OUR DEFENSES ARE COLLAPSING.

THEY'RE ALMOST ON US!




WE'D BETTER GET AWAY. FAR AWAY!

I CAN'T FORM A BOOM TUBE MATRIX--



MY MATTER THRESHOLD TRANSPORT CIRCUITS ARE DEAD TOO!

SOMEONE IS GENERATING A DISRUPTIVE FIELD.



I CREATED THE DISRUPTER FIELD SO THAT ALL MY ENEMIES WILL BE TRAPPED ON APOKOLIPS.

BUT...

BUT WE ARE ALL TRAPPED TOO!



YES.

NEARBY, IN
DESAAD'S
TORTURE
CHAMBER,
FORGOTTEN
AND ALONE...

I WILL BE
FREE!!!

WHO... AM
I KIDDING?

THE
ONLY WAY I
EVER ESCAPED
FROM THIS HELL-
HOLE BEFORE
WAS WITH
SCOTT--

TAYKIT
Ezeeee,
LUVVR...

SCOTT?!

DON'
giVUP...
BA-DA...

Ttay...
TAY--
TAYKIT--

YUR'...
GONNA
BEE
FFINE.

SCOTT!
YOU'RE
ALIVE!

KKKINDA...SSSPIRIT ISSS
WILLIING BUTTHE
FLESSH'SS WEEEEKK.

SCOTT, I
DON'T-- YOU'RE
DEAD!-- I'M
GOING INSANE?

NOOO, LOVER.
I'MMM HERE...
SSSORRY IT TUK SS...
SO LONG. TUK...
TOOK TIME TO
MODIFY CIRCUITS
FOR SPEECH.

MY B-BODY...
THAT WAS THE
REAL TRAP...

... SO I TRANSFERRED MY
CONSCIOUSNESS INTO THE
MOTHERBOX CIRCUITRY
IN YOUR ARMOR.

MY
GREATEST
ESCAPE!

BUT WE CAN
TALK LATER. YOUR
RESTRAINTS WERE
DESIGNED TO COUNTER
YOUR STRENGTH, NOT
MY SUPREME ESCAPO-
LOGICAL SKILL.

LET ME TAKE
CONTROL OF YOUR
BODY AND I'LL HAVE
YOU FREE IN A
MOMENT.



DARKSEID, THERE CAN BE NO DEFENSE AGAINST THE OMEGA DOOM. IF WE DON'T LEAVE, WE WILL DIE.

YES. THE TRAITOR AMONG YOU HAS CONVINCED ME THAT I WOULD BE MORE SUCCESSFUL WITHOUT YOU. ANY OF YOU!

BUT YOU ARE WRONG ABOUT THERE BEING NO DEFENSE.

THIS ARMOR DRAWS POWER DIRECTLY FROM THE OMEGA DOOM DEVICE. THE DETONATION WILL SERVE ONLY TO MAKE ME STRONGER.

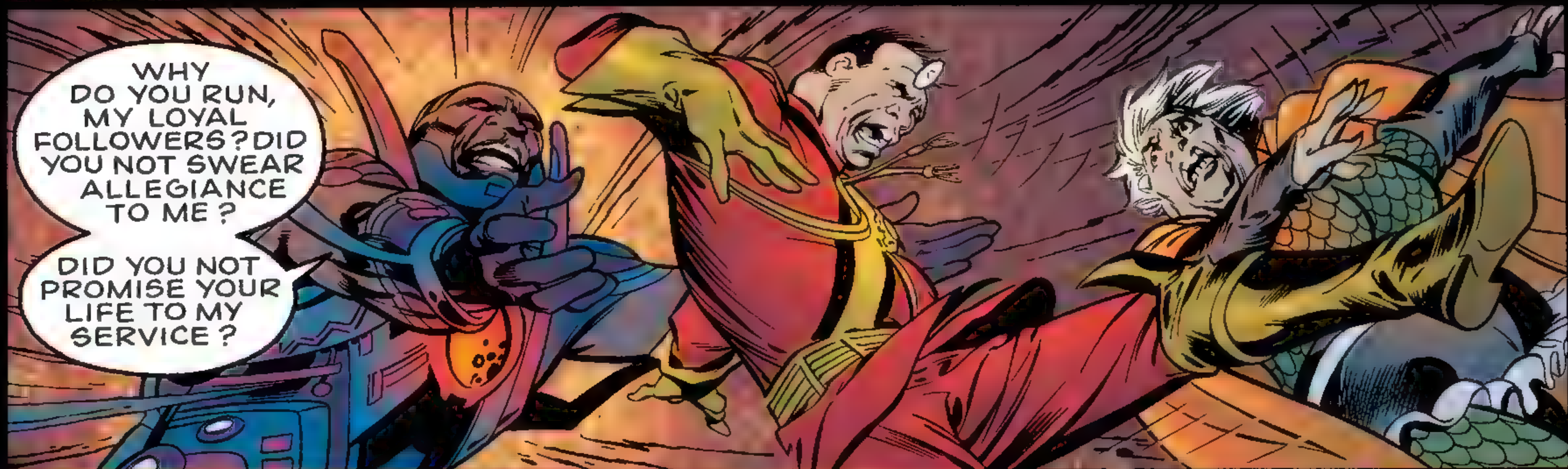
THAT DESIGN... IS MINE... BASED ON MY ANALYSIS OF THE LIMBO-CELL... SEE, MASTER... I AM NO TRAITOR... I HAVE SERVED YOU WELL.

YES, AND IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR CONTRIBUTION...

...I SHALL LET YOU LIVE TO WITNESS YOUR CREATION IN OPERATION.

NO, MASTER!

GAAAAH!



WHY DO YOU RUN, MY LOYAL FOLLOWERS? DID YOU NOT SWEAR ALLEGIANCE TO ME?

DID YOU NOT PROMISE YOUR LIFE TO MY SERVICE?

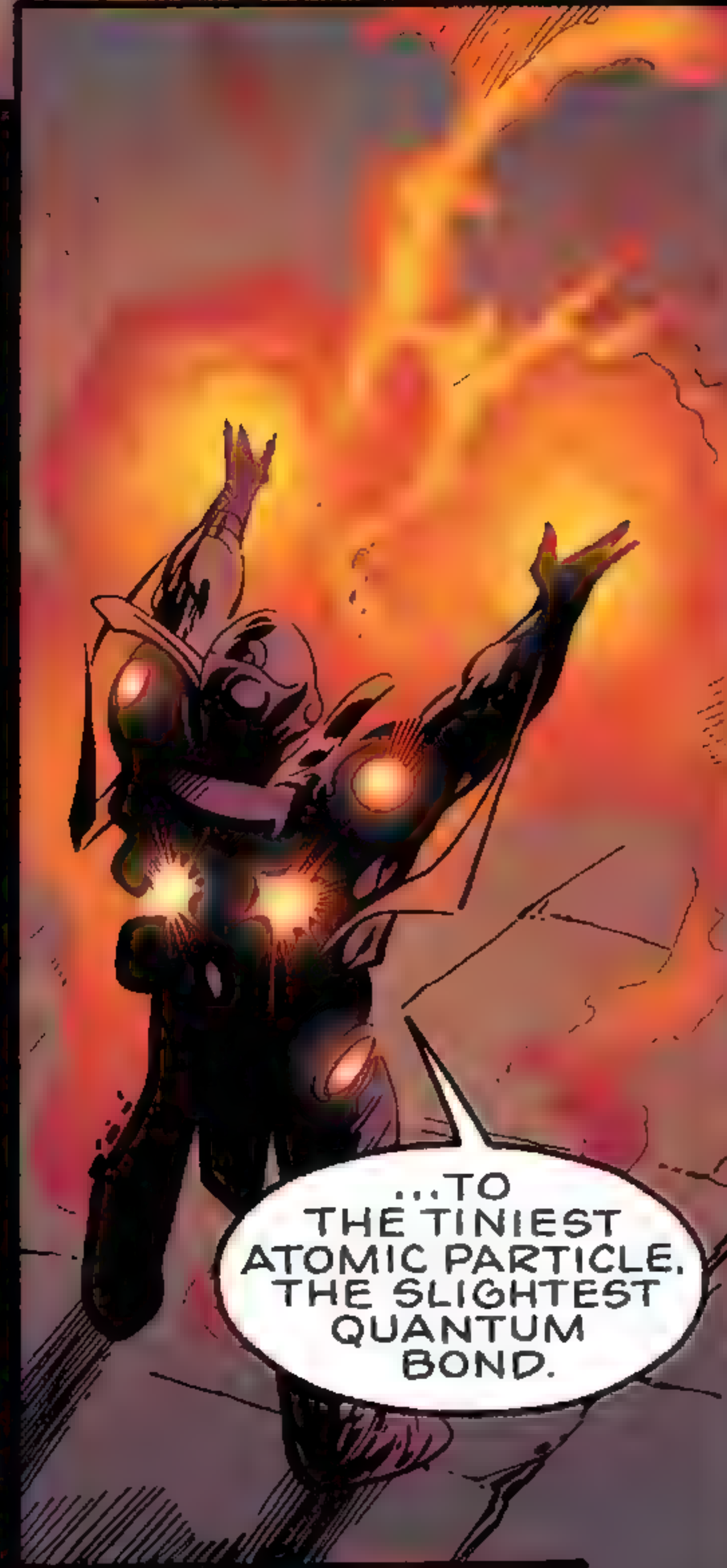


ALL THAT YOU ARE IS MINE.

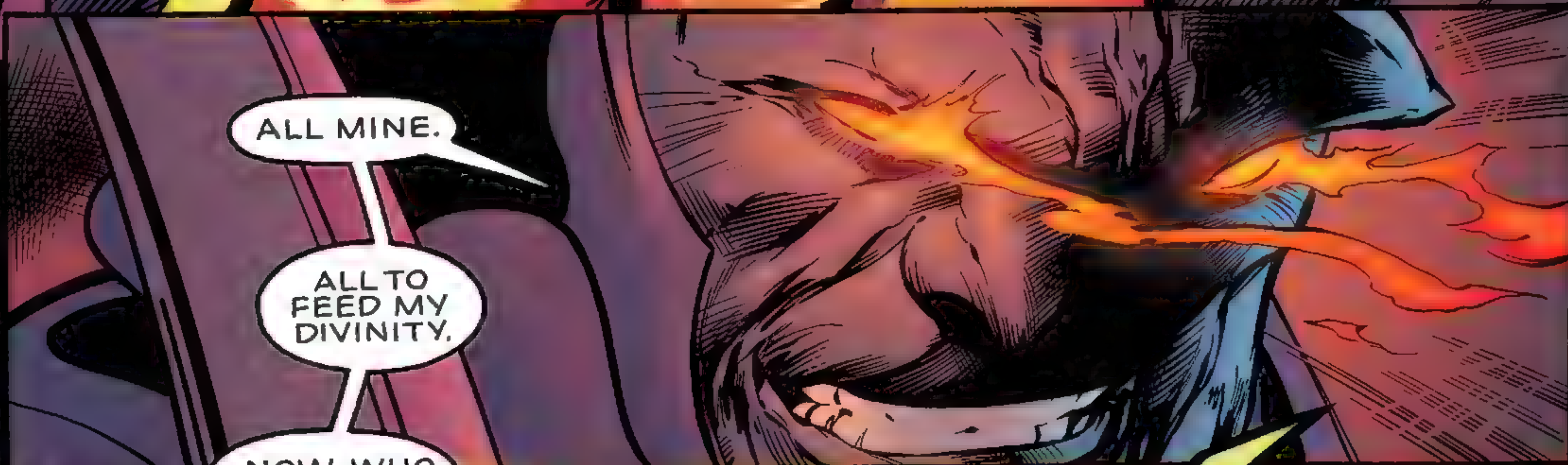
YOUR LIFEFORCE.



YOUR SUBSTANCE. YOUR ENTIRE MOLECULAR COMPOSITION...



...TO THE TINIEST ATOMIC PARTICLE. THE SLIGHTEST QUANTUM BOND.



ALL MINE.

ALL TO FEED MY DIVINITY.

NOW, WHO IS NEX--?





YOU'RE
FINISHED,
DARKSEID.
YOUR
ARMY HAS
FLED.

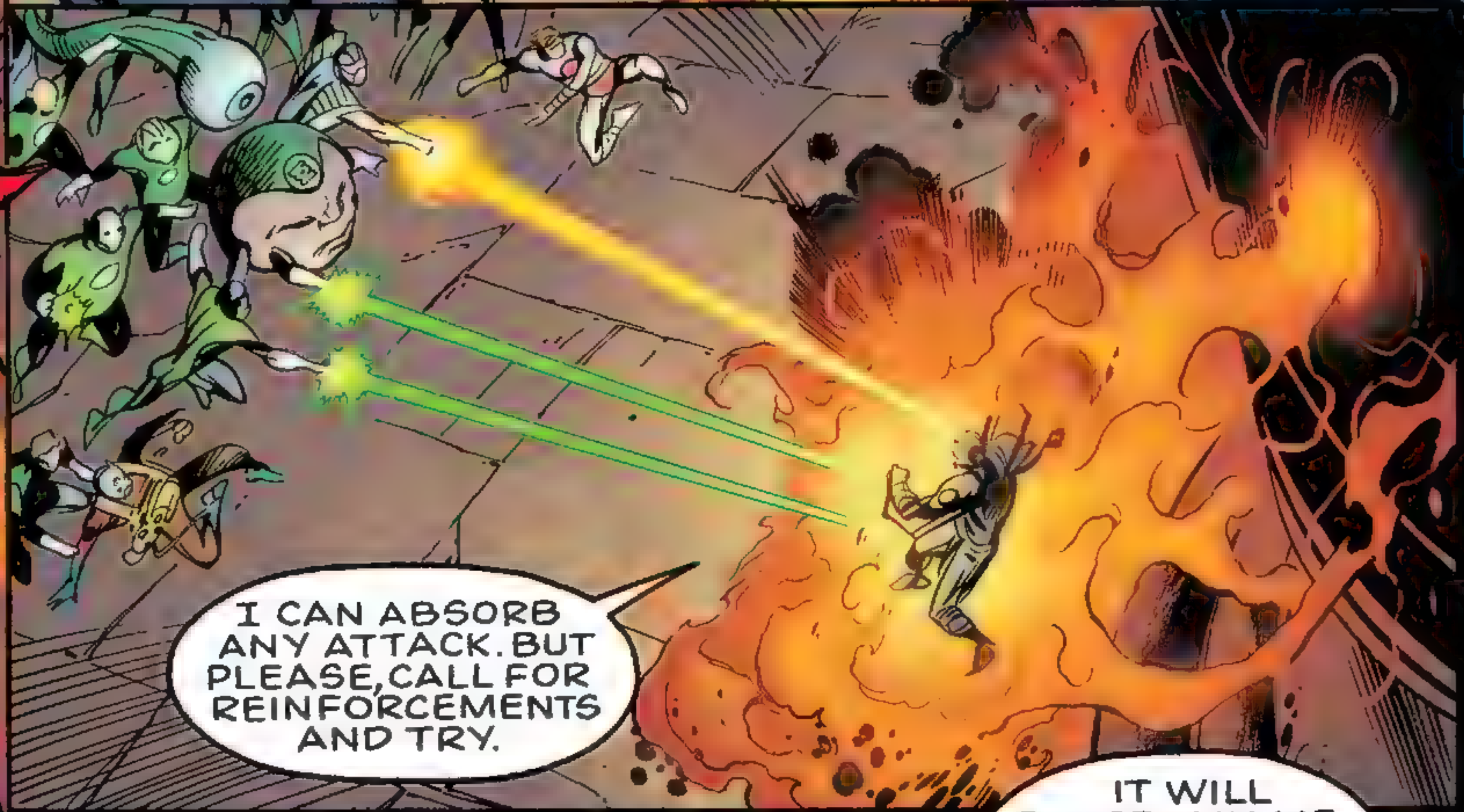
THE
WAR IS
OVER!

ORION!

ARROGANT
PUP. YOU THINK
YOU CAN STOP
ME?



NOTHING
CAN STOP
ME!



I CAN ABSORB
ANY ATTACK. BUT
PLEASE, CALL FOR
REINFORCEMENTS
AND TRY.



IT WILL
ENTERTAIN ME
TO WATCH YOUR
LAST FUTILE
STRUGGLES.

EVEN IF DARKSEID
COULD BE STOPPED,
APOKOLIPS WAS
DOOMED...

... SO THE CORPS
BEGAN TO EVACU-
ATE THE DYING
PLANET'S SLAVE
POPULATION.

SOME, LIKE GREEN
LANTERN 796,
SEPARATED FROM
THEIR SQUAD...

... TO
SEARCH FOR
SURVIVORS
IN ARMA-
GETTO'S
CRUEL
SQUALOR.

... AND
DROPPED
HER GUARD!

HEROICALLY, TRUSTINGLY,
796 DEVOTED ALL HER
CONCENTRATION TO
THE SEARCH...

NEVER CONSIDER-
ING THAT THE
ABUSED WRETCHES
SHE SOUGHT TO
AID COULD BE AS
TREACHEROUS AS
THEIR MASTER.

I'M TAKING
YOUR POWER,
ALIEN.

THE RING
IS MINE...!?

BUT THE
GUARDIANS
HAD INSTRUC-
TED EVERY
RING TO
RETURN TO
OA SHOULD
THEIR
WIELDER
FALL...

... HAVING
JUDGED
THAT NO
INHABITANT
OF THE EVIL
WORLD...

... COULD EVER
BE WORTHY
TO POSSESS A
POWER RING.

THE OMEGA DOOM
DETONATION WAS
IMMINENT.

BUT THE DEVICE COULDN'T
BE REACHED, LET ALONE
NEUTRALIZED... DARKSEID
WAS PROVING AS UNASSAIL-
ABLE AS HE HAD BOASTED.

BELIEVING THERE MUST BE
A LIMIT TO HIS DEFENSE,
THE ATTACKERS CONTINUED
TO INTENSIFY THEIR ASSAULT.

ON OA, THE GUARDIANS
GATHERED AROUND THE
MAIN POWER BATTERY,
THE REPOSITORY OF
THE GUARDIANS' OWN
PSYCHIC ENERGY...

... AN ENERGY, CAPABLE OF
GIVING FORM TO THOUGHT,
THAT POWERS EVERY
GREEN LANTERN'S RING.

BUT THE BATTERY
HAD NEVER BEFORE
ENDURED SUCH A
CONCENTRATED
DEMAND.

THE GUARDIANS
ACCELERATED THEIR
SUPPORT, ALL UNITED,
FOCUSING EVERY
FACET OF THEIR
IMMENSE MINDS IN
ONE LAST UNSUS-
TAINABLE PUSH,
UNTIL...

RING 796
REPORTED
IT HAD
ACQUIRED
A NEW
WIELDER.

THERE WAS
A TONE AND
AUTHORITY
THAT SUR-
PRISED THE
GUARDIANS.

THE RING HAD
MERGED WITH A
NEW GENESIS
MOTHER BOX'S
CIRCUITS AND
A UNIQUE
MIND...

...WITH THE FULL
ACCEPTANCE AND
SUPPORT OF THE
HIGHFATHER.

TOGETHER
WE CAN
SUCCEED.

TIME
IS SHORT.
OBSERVE
AND BE
PREPARED
TO ASSIST.

THIS
ENDS
NOW!!!

WHO?



I, BARD
FREE, REPRESENT
THE HIGHFATHER
AND GUARDIANS
OF OA.

THE DEVICE
DISRUPTING BOOM
TUBE AND MATTER
THRESHOLD TRANS-
PORT HAS BEEN
DEACTIVATED.

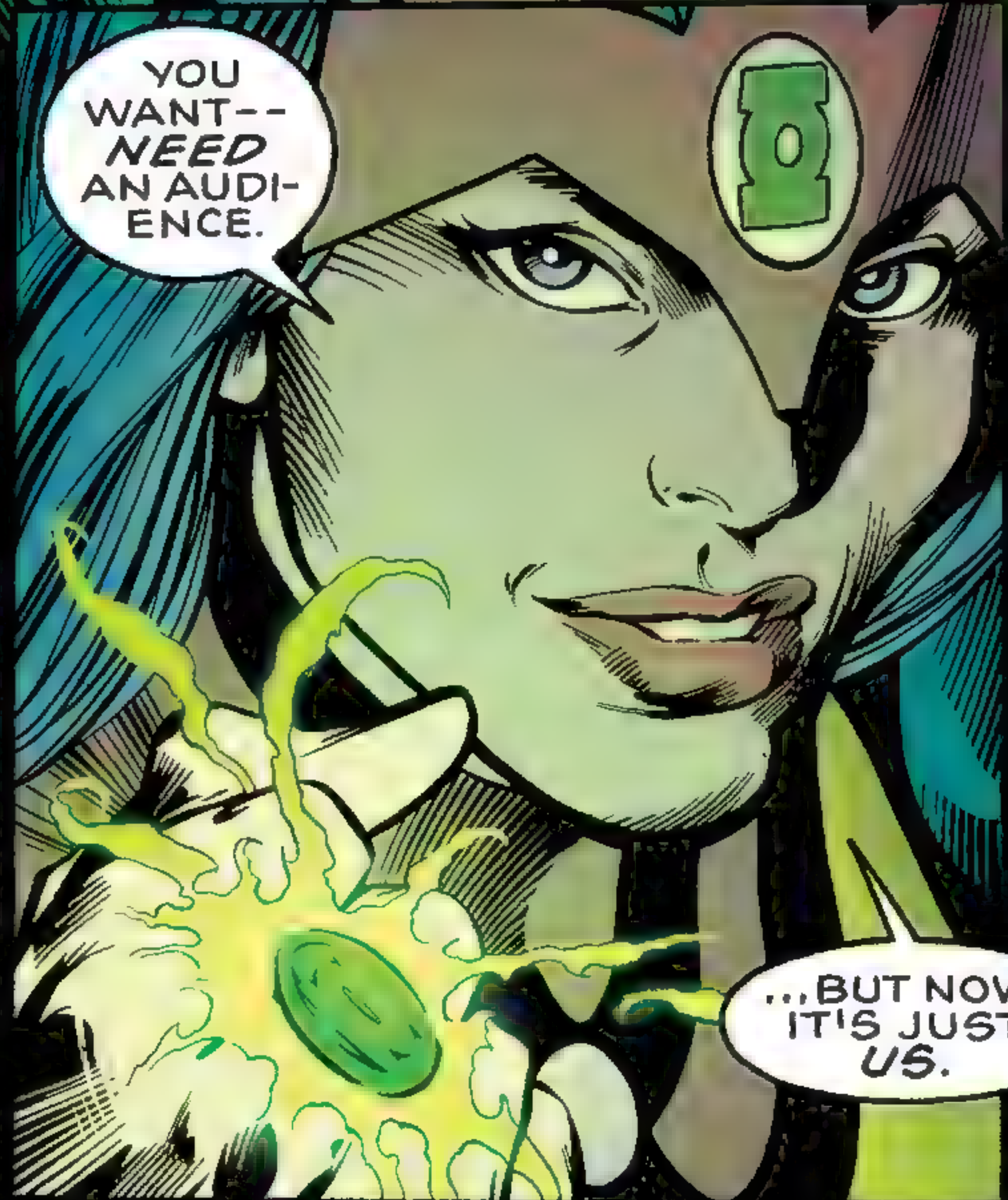
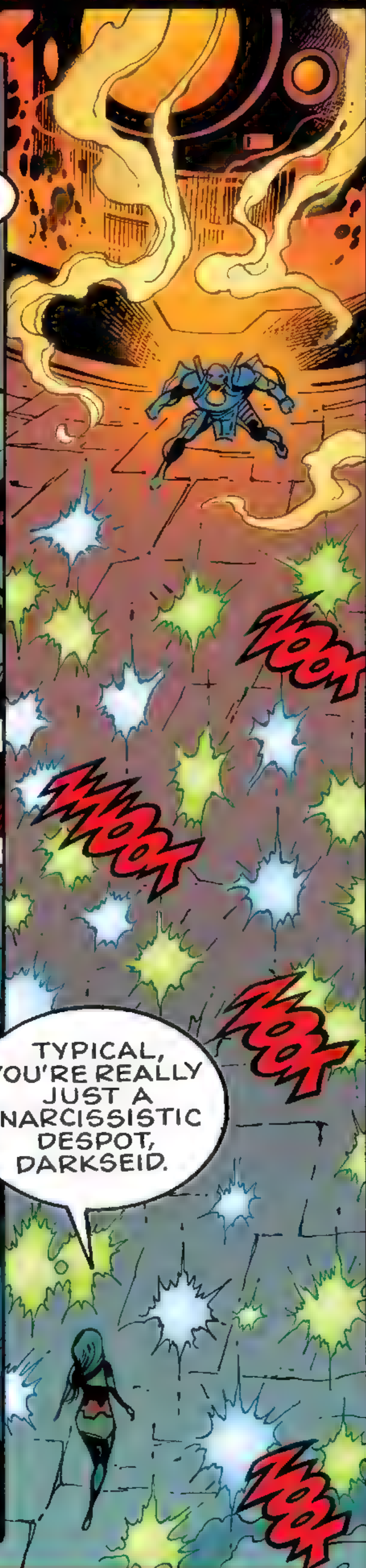
I ASK YOU
ALL TO LEAVE
QUICKLY SO THAT
I CAN ELIMINATE
THE THREAT
POSED BY
DARKSEID.



NO! YOU
CAN'T...

IT'S NOT
POSSIB--

TYPICAL,
YOU'RE REALLY
JUST A
NARCISSISTIC
DESPOT,
DARKSEID.



YOU
WANT--
NEED
AN AUDI-
ENCE.

...BUT NOW
IT'S JUST
US.



YOU THINK
YOU CAN SUC-
CEED WHERE
THE OTHERS
FAILED?



YES. I
LEARNED A
LOT FROM THE
PEOPLE OF
EARTH.

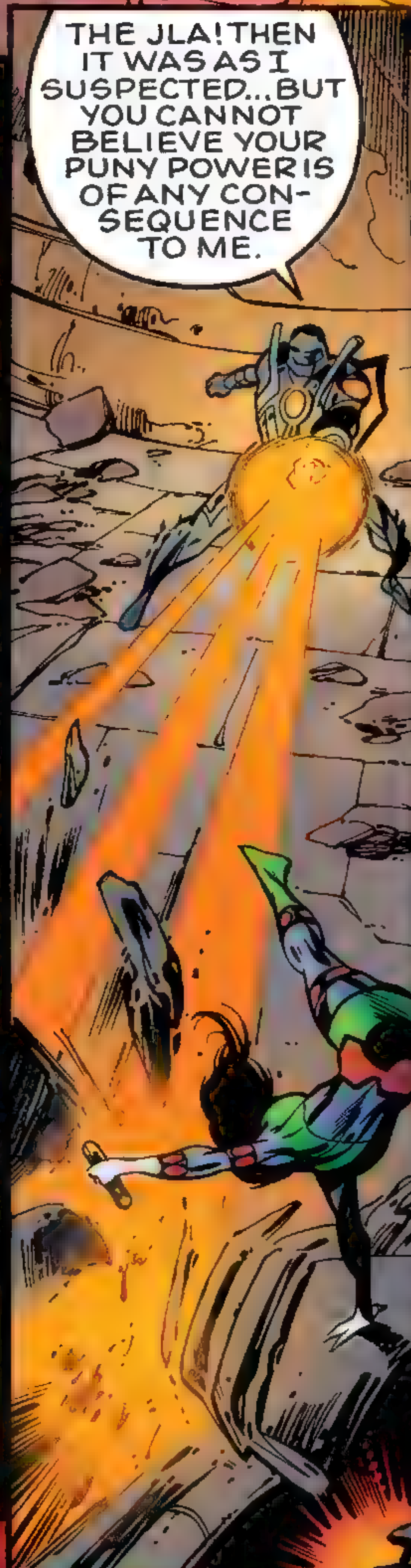
HA! I CAN
BELIEVE THAT.
YOU CANNOT EVEN
CONTROL THE OAN
RING. YOU WOULD BE
AN EMBARRASS-
MENT TO YOUR
FEMALE FURY
BATTALION.



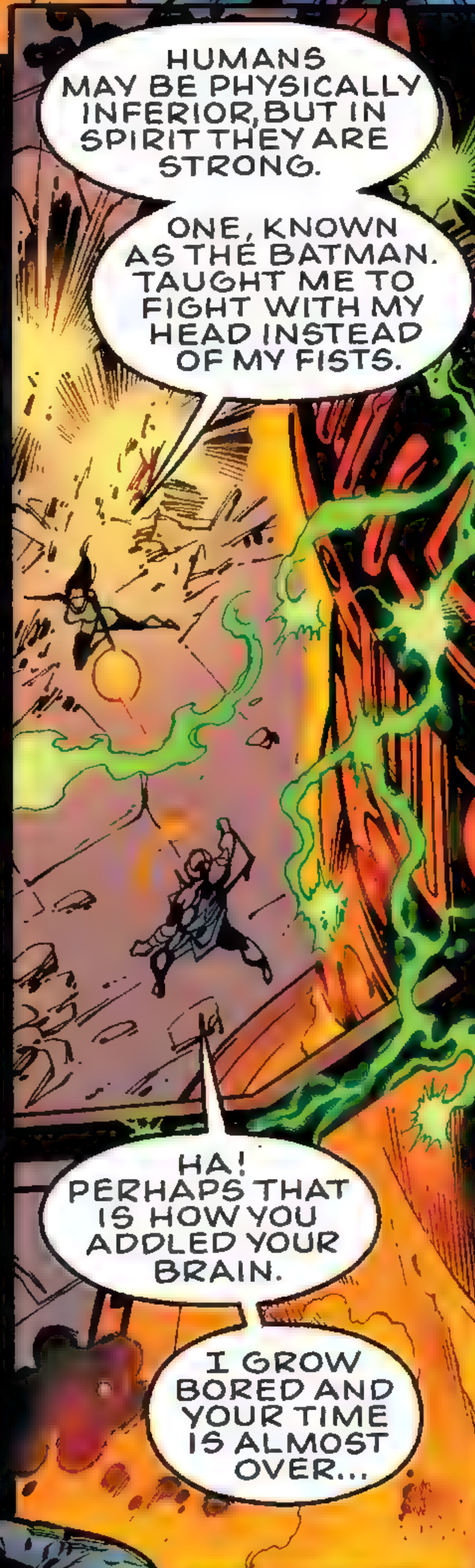
I STILL
HAVE MY
POWER
MACE.

AND THE
FIGHTING
SKILLS...

...OF
THE
JLA.



THE JLA! THEN
IT WAS AS I
SUSPECTED... BUT
YOU CANNOT
BELIEVE YOUR
PUNY POWER IS
OF ANY CON-
SEQUENCE
TO ME.



HUMANS
MAY BE PHYSICALLY
INFERIOR, BUT IN
SPIRIT THEY ARE
STRONG.

ONE, KNOWN
AS THE BATMAN.
TAUGHT ME TO
FIGHT WITH MY
HEAD INSTEAD
OF MY FISTS.

HA!
PERHAPS THAT
IS HOW YOU
ADDLED YOUR
BRAIN.

I GROW
BORED AND
YOUR TIME
IS ALMOST
OVER...



...TELL ME,
FOOLISH WENCH,
WHY DID YOU NOT
FLEE WITH THE
OTHERS? WHAT
DID YOU HOPE TO
ACHIEVE WITH
YOUR FEEBLE
ATTACK?

A
DISTRACTION!



THE FIRST
PRINCIPLE OF
ANY CLEVER
ILLUSION...

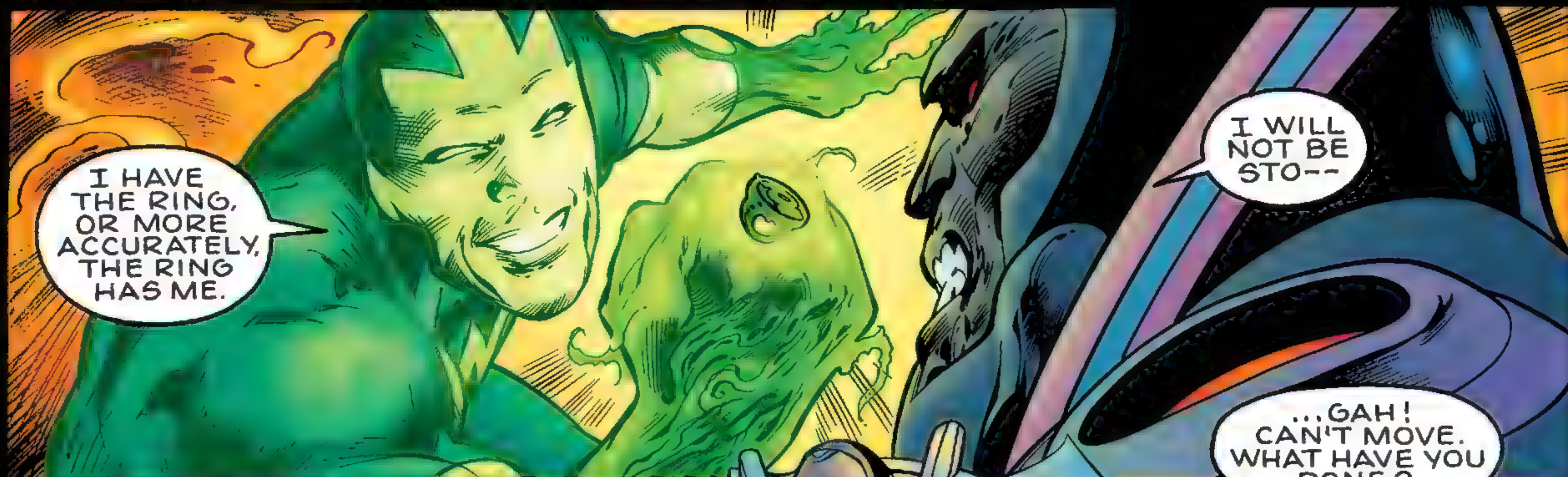


...OR
ANY REALLY
SNEAKY
ATTACK.

BARDA
DIDN'T MISS
YOU.

SHE WAS
POSITIONING ME
WHERE I COULD
DO THE MOST
HARM.

YOU'RE
DEAD!
HOW...?



I HAVE THE RING, OR MORE ACCURATELY, THE RING HAS ME.

I WILL NOT BE STO--

...GAH! CAN'T MOVE. WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?



IT'S CALLED ATOMIC EXPANSION OR SOMESUCH.

I NEVER UNDERSTOOD HIMON'S SCIENCE. IT ALWAYS SOUNDED LIKE MADE-UP WORDS TO ME.

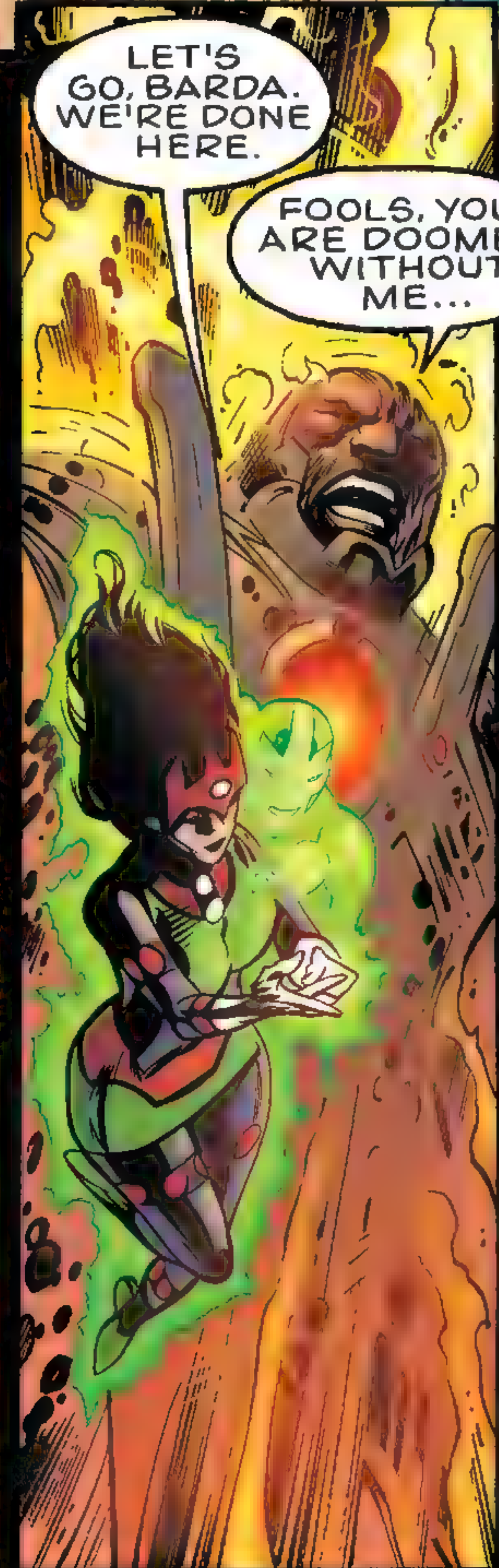
THE GIST OF IT IS THAT I, SCOTT FREE, THE ULTIMATE ESCAPOLOGIST, HAVE USED THE OAN RING, THE ULTIMATE TOOL, AND THE MOTHER BOX, THE ULTIMATE CALCULATOR...

...TO REARRANGE YOUR FUNKY OUTFIT AND THE OMEGA DOOM MATRIX.



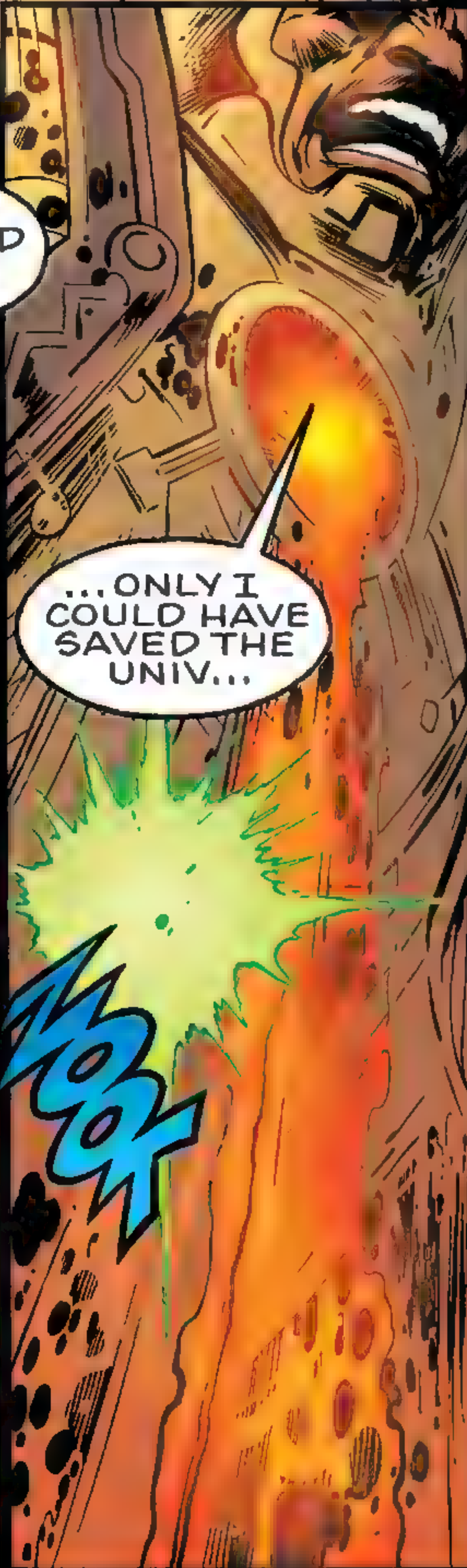
SO THAT WHEN IT DETONATES THE GALAXY WON'T BLOW UP...

BUT YOU WILL.




LET'S GO, BARDA. WE'RE DONE HERE.

FOOLS, YOU ARE DOOMED WITHOUT ME...



...ONLY I COULD HAVE SAVED THE UNIV...



FUELED BY THE
SUBSTANCE OF HIS
DYING WORLD...
DARKSEID GREW
EXPLOSIVELY.

IN SECONDS, HE
TOWERED OVER
THE SHRINKING
PLANETARY HUSK.

IN LITTLE MORE
THAN A MINUTE
HE DWARFED
NEW GENESIS,
AND APOKOLIPS
WAS NO MORE.

THEN, WHEN HIS
ATOMS WERE TOO
WIDELY SPACED
TO MAINTAIN ANY
COHESIVE LINK...

... THE FORCE OF
THE EXPLOSIVE
EXPANSION
INCREASED...

... AND DARKSEID
EVAPORATED
INTO INFINITY.

NEW GENESIS HUNG
ALONE IN THE VOID.

A HOME
WAS OFFERED TO
ANY OF DARKSEID'S
MINIONS WILLING TO
SWEAR ALLEGIANCE
TO THE HIGH-
FATHER...

... AND
AFTER MILLENNIA
OF WAR THERE
IS A CHANCE
FOR GENUINE
PEACE.

LANTERN,
THIS ALL OCCURRED
A YEAR AGO WHILE
WE WERE BUSY TAKING
LUMPS OFF SUPER-
JIMMY.

... AND
ALTHOUGH IT'S
A GREAT STORY,
IT SEEMS LIKE IT
HAD A HAPPY
ENDING.

SO WHY DID I CALL A MEETING OF THE JLA TO SHOW AN OLD FILM?

TRUTH IS... I'M NOT SURE. I COULD BE WASTING EVERYONE'S TIME, *BUT...*

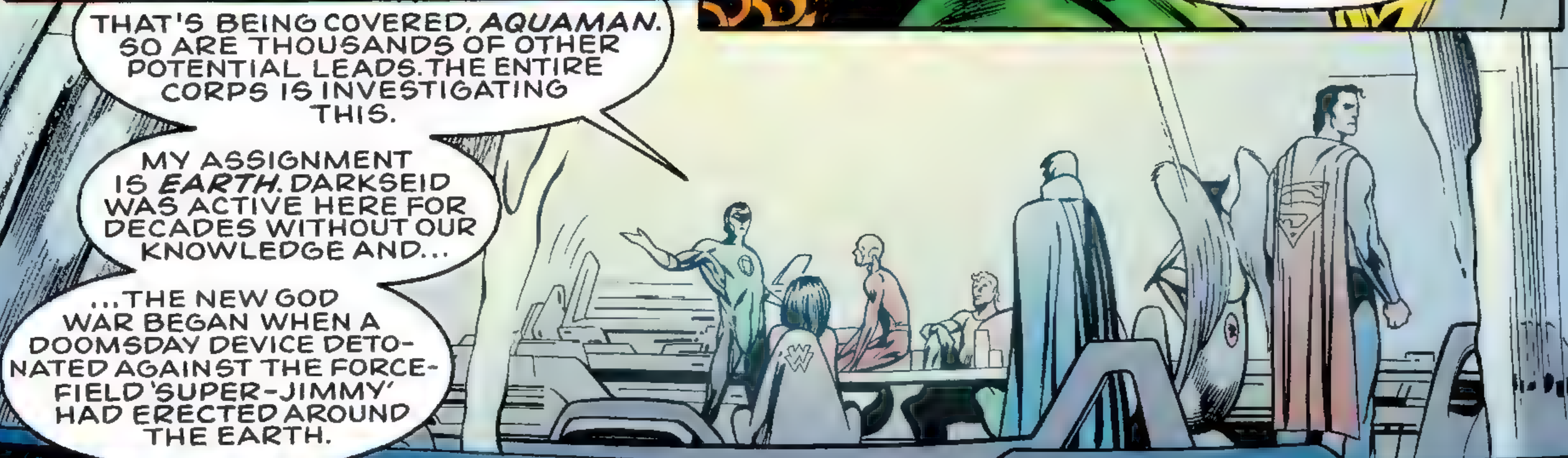
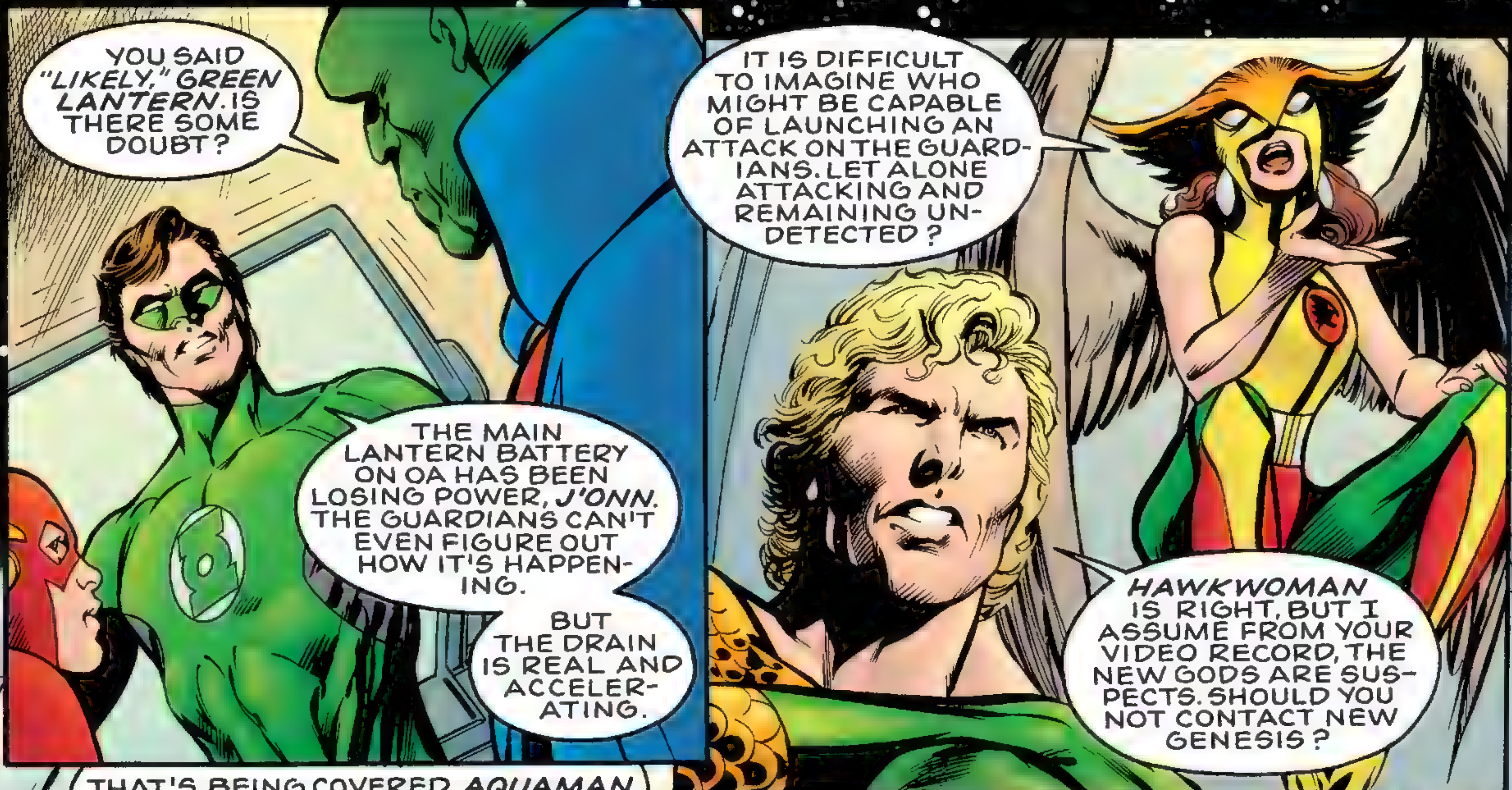
...IT'S LIKELY THAT THE GREEN LANTERN CORPS IS UNDER ATTACK AND WE HAVE NO IDEA WHO IS RESPONSIBLE.

ANOTHER MYSTERY OPPONENT. IS THIS DEJAVU, OR HAVE WE BEEN HERE BEFORE?

ASIDE FROM THE FACT THAT THIS TIME WE'RE IN OUR BRAND SPANKING NEW *SUPER-SATELLITE* HQ...

...I'D SAY THIS IS DEFINITELY FAMILIAR, *ATOM*.



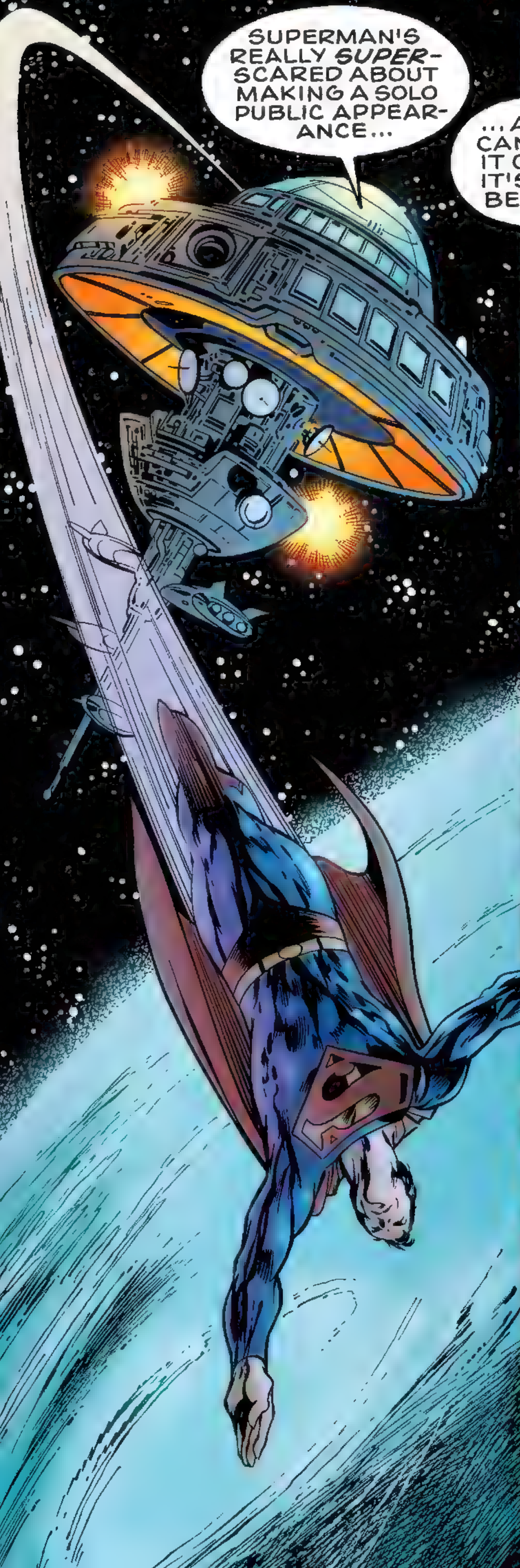




IF THERE IS A THREAT TO EARTH... SOME DANGER I... WE OVERLOOKED...

IT IS POSSIBLE... AND THE CEREMONY IS... IS -- DO I HAVE TO GO?

YES!!



SUPERMAN'S REALLY *SUPER*-SCARED ABOUT MAKING A SOLO PUBLIC APPEARANCE...

...AND WE CAN WATCH IT ON TV-- IT'S GONNA BE GREAT.



STRANGE THAT ONE SO POWERFUL SHOULD BE SOCIALLY TIMID.

PERHAPS IT'S BECAUSE HE WAS RAISED BY THE AMISH. I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THEIR RULES AND BELIEFS BUT THEY ARE RECLUSIVE.



KAL NEVER TALKS ABOUT THAT PART OF HIS LIFE. I THINK IT'S TOO PAINFUL.

NOT SURPRISING. JIMMY ROASTED KAL'S PARENTS IN FRONT OF HIM...

...AND HE WAS FORCED TO LEAVE HIS HOME AND FRIENDS FOR FEAR OF EXPOSING THEM TO FURTHER HARM. HE'S LOST A LOT.



WHAT DO YOU THINK, J'ONN? YOU TAUGHT KAL TO USE HIS POWERS, SO YOU MUST HAVE COME TO KNOW HIM.

I HAVE BEEN NO MORE THAN A COMPANION. KAL HAS GROWN THROUGH HIS OWN SUPREME DEDICATION. THERE SEEMS NO LIMIT TO HIS POTENTIAL.



IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT HE WILL BECOME THE MOST POWERFUL BEING IN THE UNIVERSE.



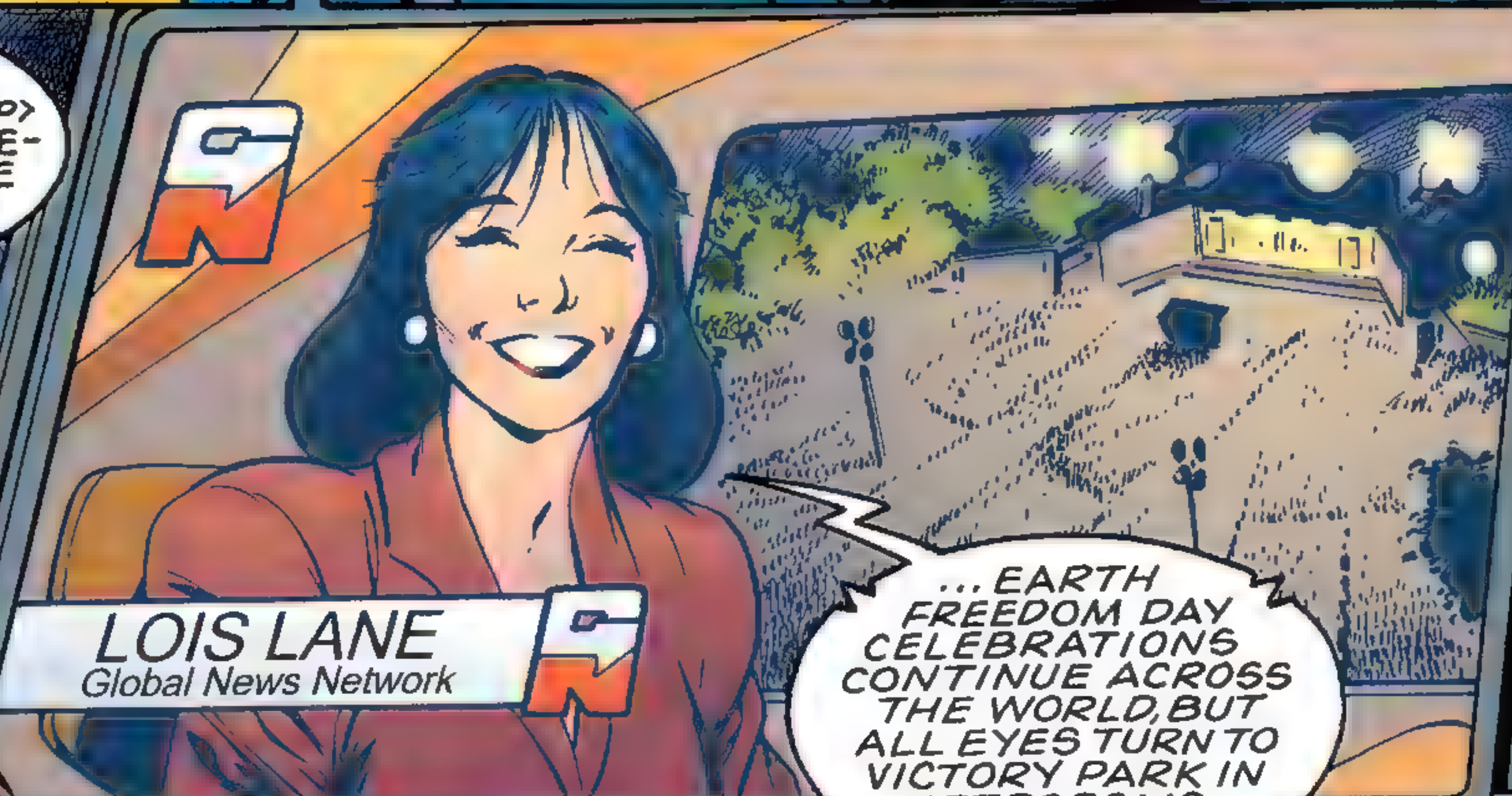
HEY, GUYS. IT'S TIME! ANYONE WANT TO BET HE DOESN'T SHOW UP?



WOW, LOIS IS LOOKING HOT.

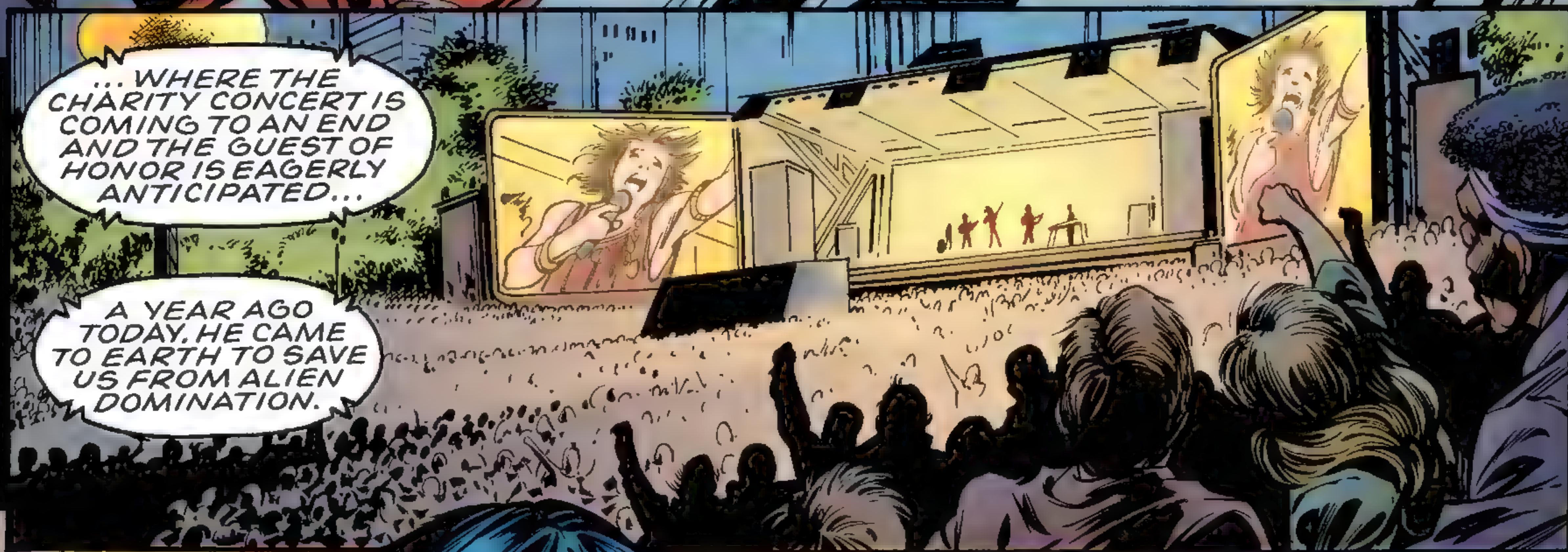
WHAT DO YOU RECKON (CHOMP) EXECUTIVE MAKE-OVER, OR IS SHE AFTER A GUY?

PIG!



LOIS LANE
Global News Network

... EARTH FREEDOM DAY CELEBRATIONS CONTINUE ACROSS THE WORLD. BUT ALL EYES TURN TO VICTORY PARK IN METROPOLIS...

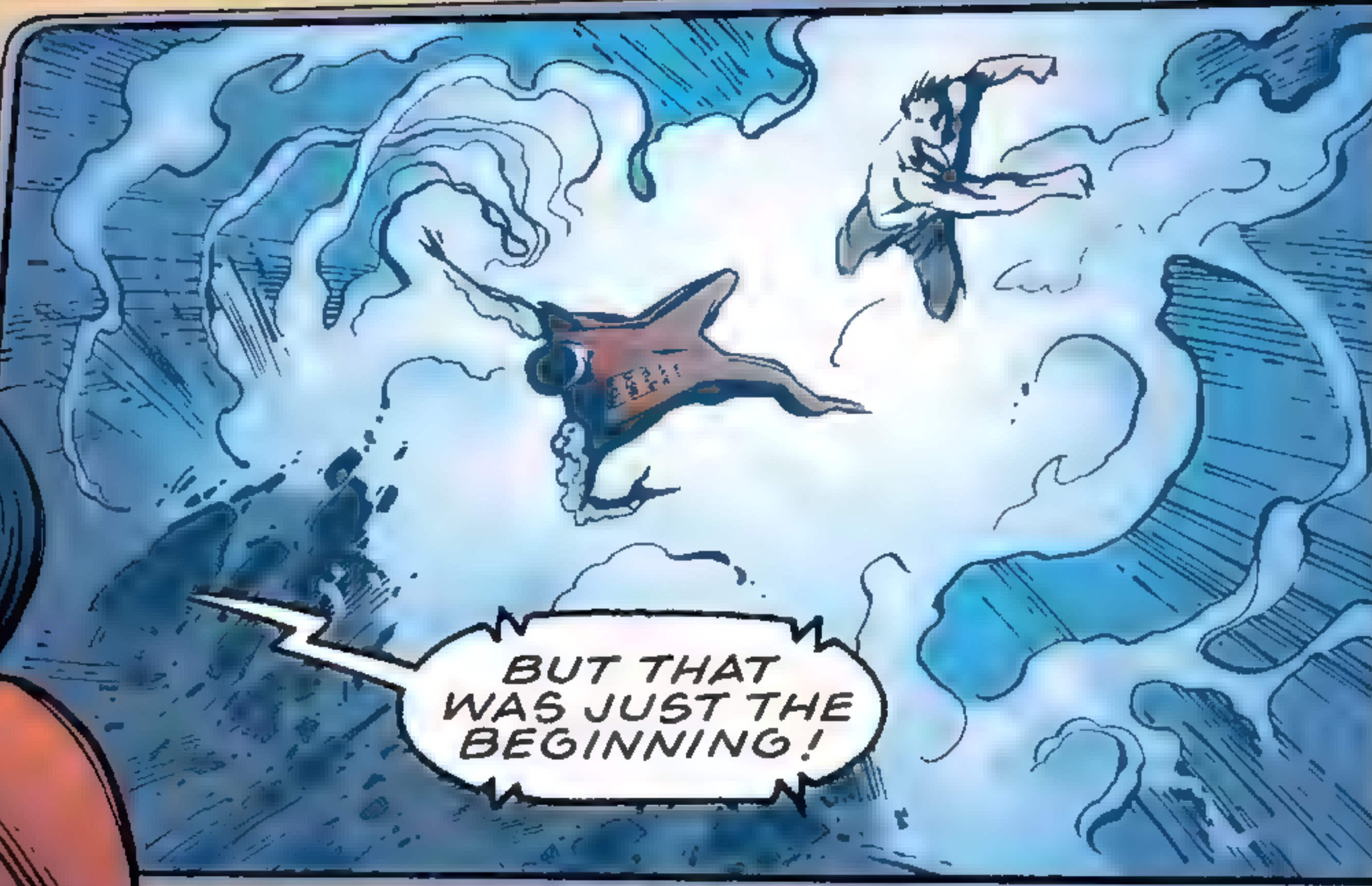


... WHERE THE CHARITY CONCERT IS COMING TO AN END AND THE GUEST OF HONOR IS EAGERLY ANTICIPATED...


A YEAR AGO TODAY, HE CAME TO EARTH TO SAVE US FROM ALIEN DOMINATION.



I WAS LUCKY TO BE AT THE SCENE -- THE ONLY JOURNALIST AND ONE OF ONLY A HANDFUL THAT WITNESSED THE GREATEST BATTLE THE EARTH HAS KNOWN.



BUT THAT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING!



"... COMBATING
TERRESTRIAL
INJUSTICE
AND THE
INCREDIBLE
ALIEN
MENACES THAT
REGULARLY
APPEAR TO
THREATEN US.

"AS TIME
PASSED IT
BECAME
APPARENT
THAT MAN-
KIND'S
MYSTERIOUS
NEW ALLY
WAS ALWAYS
AT THE
CENTER,
SHOULDER-
ING THE
GREATEST
BURDEN...

"THE WORLD
STILL DIS-
TRUSTED
META-
HUMANS...

"... BUT --
ALONG
WITH THEIR
NEWEST
MEMBER --

"-- THE JLA
CONTINUED
TO WORK
FOR THE
BENEFIT
OF MAN...

"... SEEMING
NEVER TO
SLEEP.

"EVER
VIGILANT...

"... AND POWERFUL!
POWERFUL ENOUGH TO
DISPERSE A TORNADO.

"... HE IS KALEL,
THE LAST SON
OF KRYPTON...

"... FEARLESS...

"... BUT WE KNOW HIM
BEST BY A NAME MADE
POPULAR BY THE COUNT-
LESS BENEFICIARIES OF
HIS COMPASSION AND
HEROISM...

"... SUPERMAN!"



TONIGHT THE
WORLD WILL
HONOR--

--BUT NOW
IT'S TIME TO
CUT ACROSS TO
VICTORY PARK...

...WHERE
SUPERMAN
HAS JUST
ARRIVED.

I WONDER HOW
FAST HE'LL DELIVER
HIS SPEECH?

HIGH
ORBIT TO
METROPOLIS IN
LESS THAN TEN
MINUTES. J'ONN
IS RIGHT. KAL'S
ABILITIES GROW
EVER MORE
AMAZING.

OR
MAYBE
A LITTLE
JEALOUS?

YOU ARE
BEING CRUEL,
FLASH.

JEALOUS!? OF
PUBLIC ADULATION--
NEVER!

THEN
WHAT?
SOME-
THING'S
BUGGING
YOU.

YOU'RE
SO BUSY
PATROLLING
THE GALAXY
YOU WOULDN'T
KNOW.

ENLIGHTEN
ME THEN.

IT'S LIKE
LOIS SAID...
KAL DOES MOST
OF WHAT THE
JLA USED TO
DO.

DISASTERS
AVOIDED. CRIMINALS
IN JAIL. IT'S WHAT
WE'RE ALL TRYING TO
ACHIEVE. WHAT IS IT
YOU MISS? THE
ADVENTURE?

YEAH, SO...
DON'T TELL
ME YOU'RE NOT
HOPING THERE'S
SOMETHING TO
THIS DARKSEID
THING...

...OR ARE YOU JUST OUT
TO IMPRESS THE GUARDIANS
BECAUSE YOU WERE TRAPPED
HERE WITH US DURING THE
NEW GODS WAR AND
MISSED OUT ON--

SHHHSSH.
PLEASE...
GENTLE-
MEN!

... TO MAKE
THE PRESENTATION,
THOMAS KALMAKU,
U.N. SPOKESMAN FOR
YOUTH AND WORLD
FRIENDSHIP.

THERE ARE MANY MORE WORTHY THAN I TO PRESENT THIS AWARD.

GREAT MEN AND WOMEN, LEADERS OF STATE, INCLUDING OUR OWN PRESIDENT WHO IS IN ATTENDANCE HERE TONIGHT.

BUT THIS EVENT IS NOT ABOUT COUNTRIES OR POLITICS. IT IS ABOUT A DREAM FOR MANKIND'S FUTURE HARMONY AS PERSONIFIED BY THE EXAMPLE OF ONE MAN.

WE MAY NOT HAVE YOUR POWER, SUPERMAN, BUT I HOPE WE CAN LEARN TO EMULATE YOUR COMPASSION.

ON BEHALF OF ALL THOSE YOU HAVE HELPED OR INSPIRED I OFFER THIS TOKEN OF OUR ESTEEM.

YAYYYYYY!!

SUPERMAN, SUPERMAN...

YO' THE BEST, BIG GUY.

SUPEERMAN!

YYYYAAAAAYYY!!!

WE LOVE YOU!

SUPERMAN

SUP

THANK YOU... THIS IS AN HONOR... MORE THAN I DESERVE... IT IS ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO HELP...

...I...

...I...
THANK YOU.

2
7
8



WELL, THAT WAS, SUPERMAN. I GUESS THE MAN OF STEEL HAS AN IMPORTANT MISSION.

THE MAN OF VERY FEW WORDS.

ALWAYS LEAVE THEM WANTING MORE.



I WAS EMBARRASSED.

I'LL SAY, YOU MADE THE TRIP BACK IN--

SEVENTY-FOUR SECONDS.

IS THAT POSSIBLE?



YEAH, FOR THE FASTEST MAN ALIVE.

THERE MUST BE SOME SORT OF TIME DELAY ON THE BROADCAST.

I HAVE PREPARED THE IDEAL SPACE TO DISPLAY THIS AWARD IN THE TROPHY ROOM.



IT IS A SINGULAR CRYSTAL FORMATION. I HAVE NEVER SEEN ITS LIKE.

THEY SAID IT WAS FOUND IN A METEORITE.



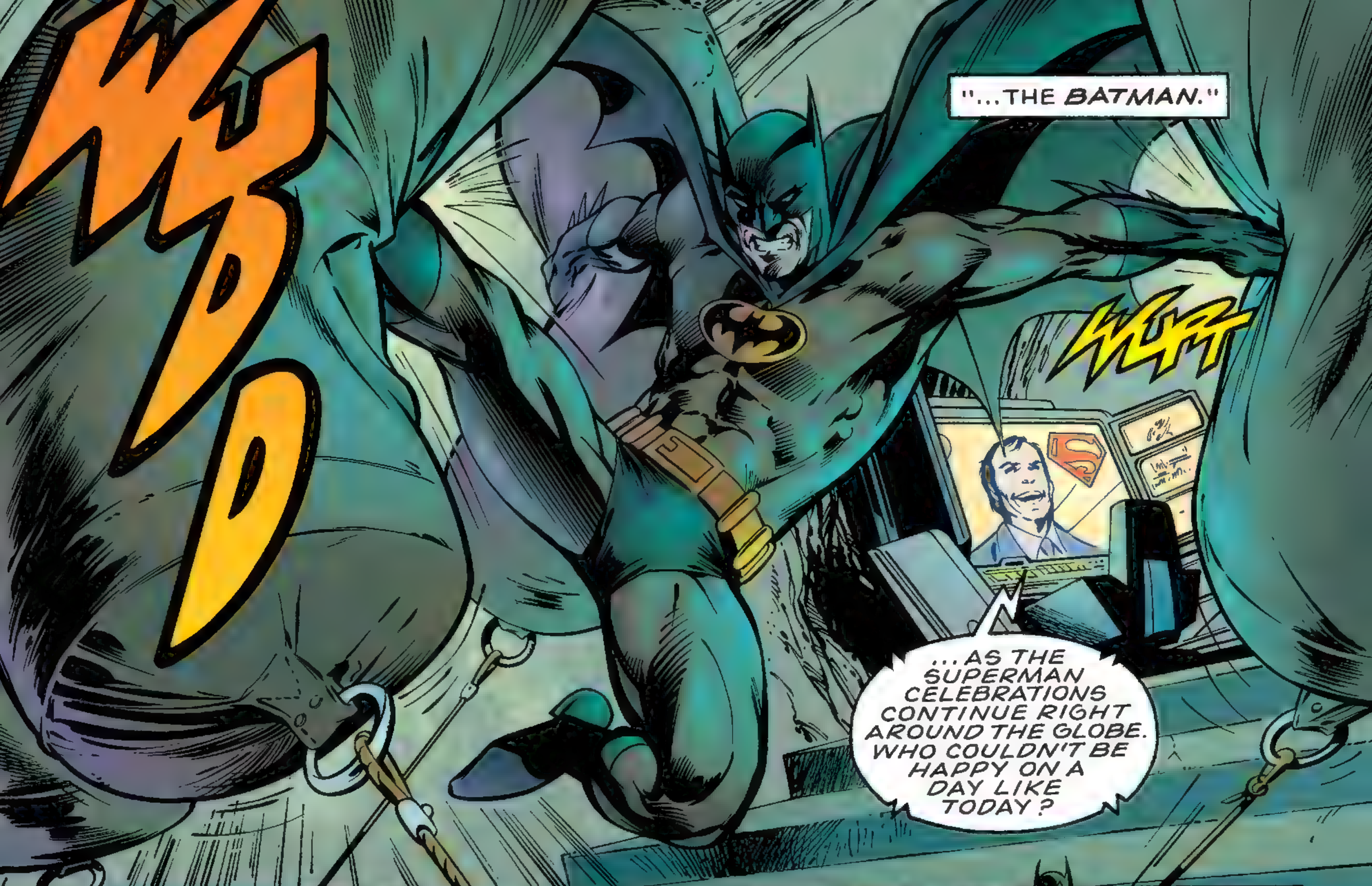
SOMETHING WRONG, WONDER WOMAN?

EVERY CELEBRATION IS TINGED WITH SORROW AND REGRET...



...FOR THOSE COMRADES WHO ARE NO LONGER WITH US. HAWK-MAN...

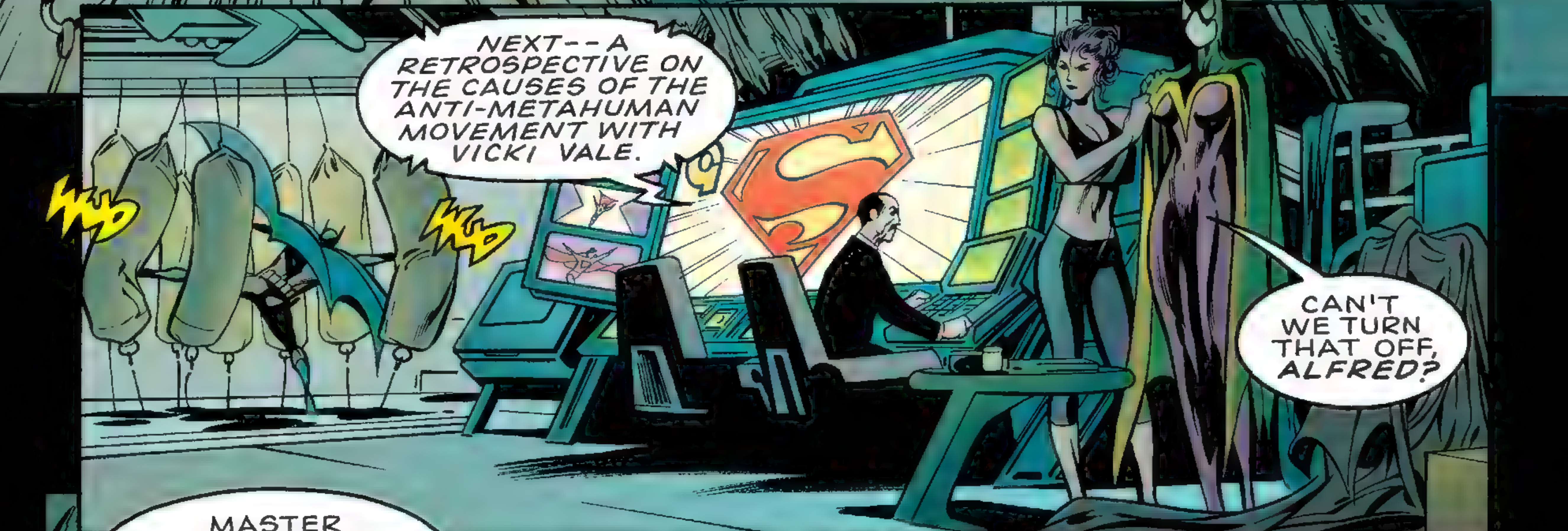
...GREEN ARROW... AND...



"...THE *BATMAN*."

WFT

...AS THE
SUPERMAN
CELEBRATIONS
CONTINUE RIGHT
AROUND THE GLOBE.
WHO COULDN'T BE
HAPPY ON A
DAY LIKE
TODAY?



NEXT-- A
RETROSPECTIVE ON
THE CAUSES OF THE
ANTI-METAHUMAN
MOVEMENT WITH
VICKI VALE.

CAN'T
WE TURN
THAT OFF,
ALFRED?

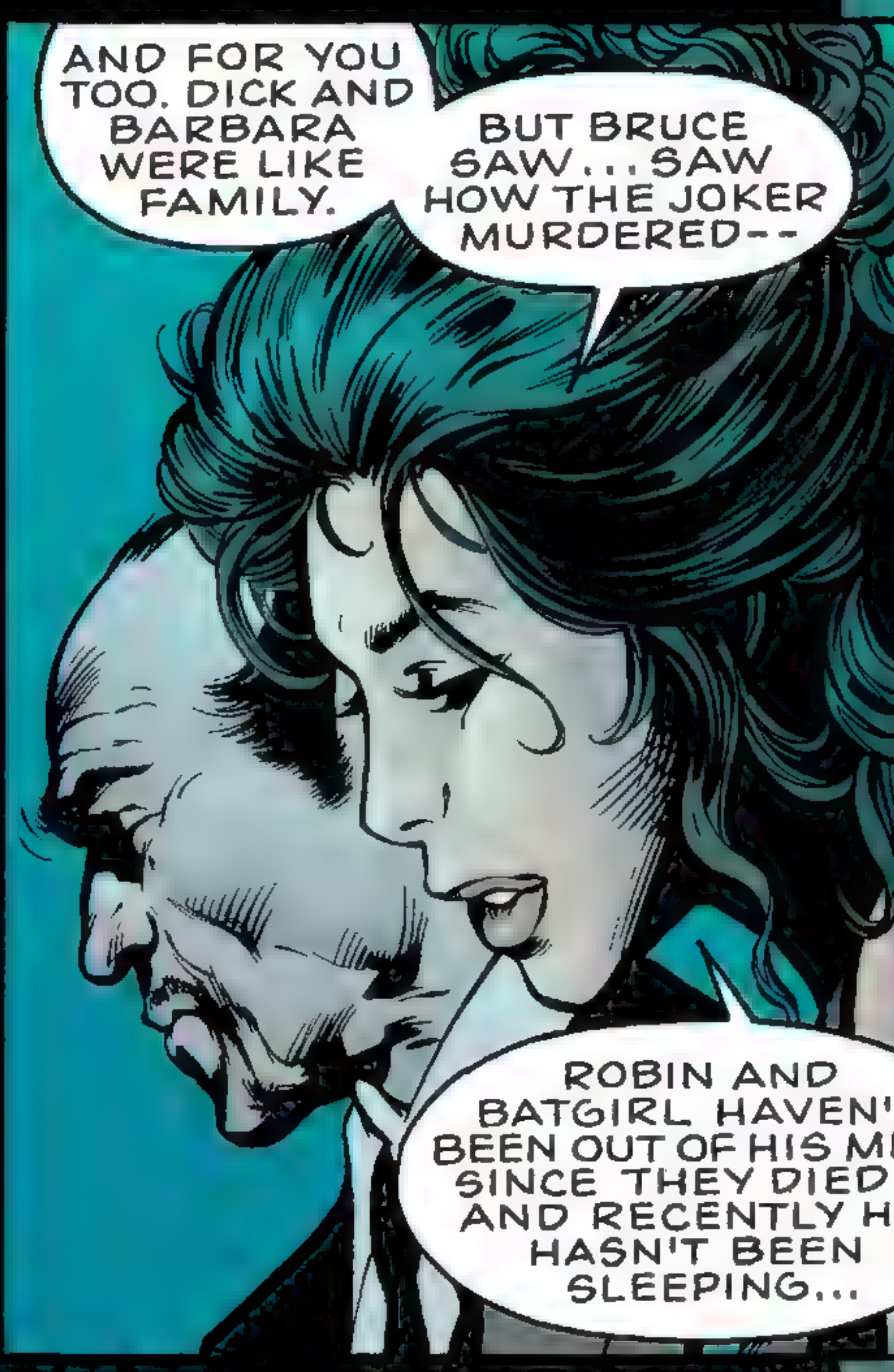
MASTER
BRUCE WANTS TO
MONITOR THE LOCAL
NEWS REPORTS FOR ANY
ACTIVITY THAT MIGHT
BE ATTRIBUTABLE
TO *POISON IVY*,
MS. SELINA.

SORRY, ALFRED.
I'M JUST NOT IN THE
MOOD FOR ONE OF VICKI
VALE'S JOURNALISTIC
EXPOSÉS.

I UNDERSTAND,
MS. SELINA.

I KNOW...
IF ARKHAM
ASYLUM GOT
SOME DECENT
SECURITY WE
COULD ALL
RETIRE--

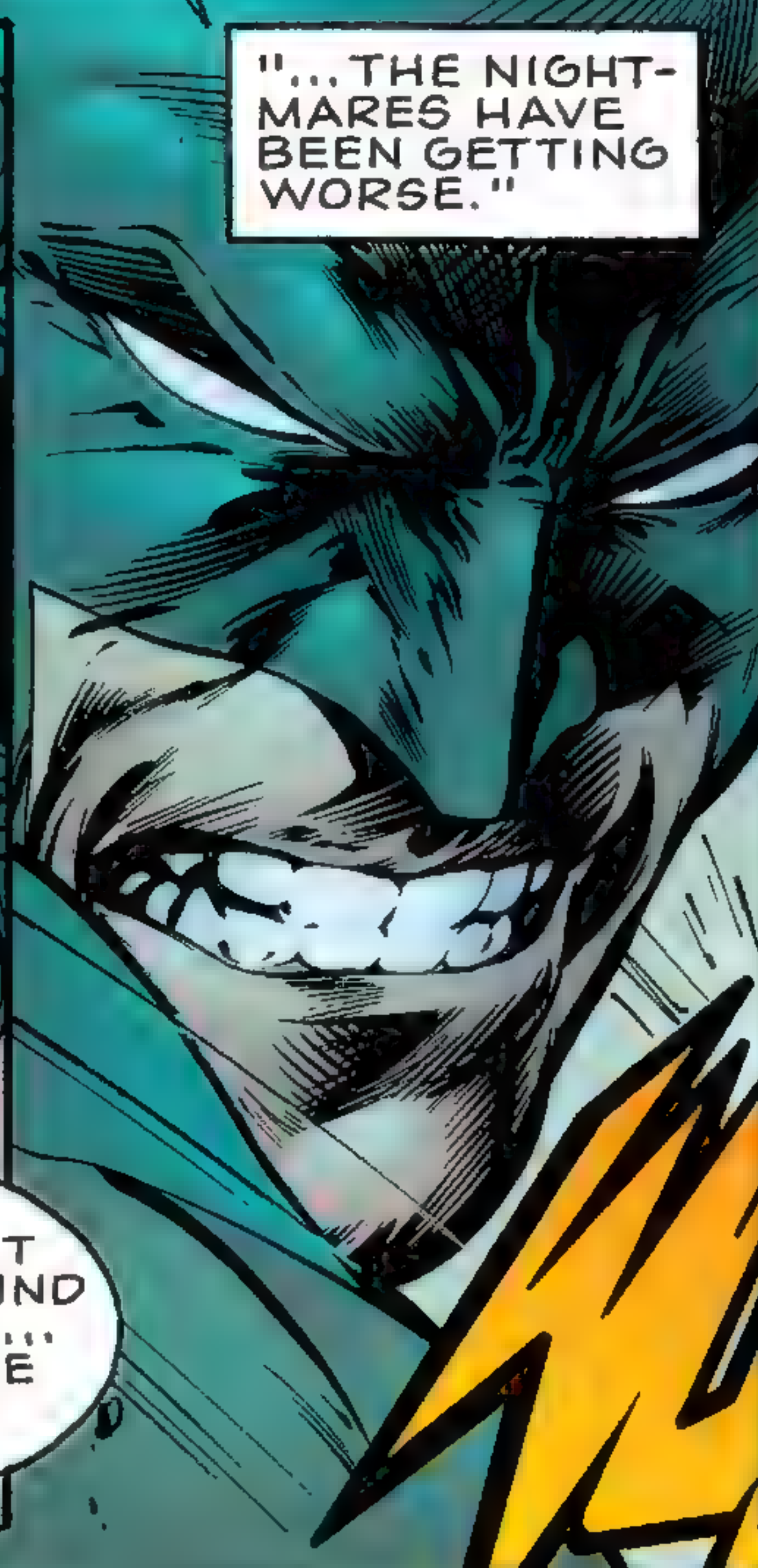
IT IS
UNFORTUNATE
THAT THIS TIME
OF CELEBRATION
FOR SUPERMAN IS THE
ANNIVERSARY OF
DEEP SADNESS FOR
YOU AND MASTER
BRUCE.



AND FOR YOU TOO. DICK AND BARBARA WERE LIKE FAMILY.

BUT BRUCE SAW... SAW HOW THE JOKER MURDERED--

ROBIN AND BATGIRL HAVEN'T BEEN OUT OF HIS MIND SINCE THEY DIED... AND RECENTLY HE HASN'T BEEN SLEEPING...



"...THE NIGHTMARES HAVE BEEN GETTING WORSE."



THERE WAS A MESSAGE FROM THE GREEN LANTERN. AN INVITATION TO A MEETING OF THE JUSTICE LEAGUE. MASTER BRUCE DECLINED.

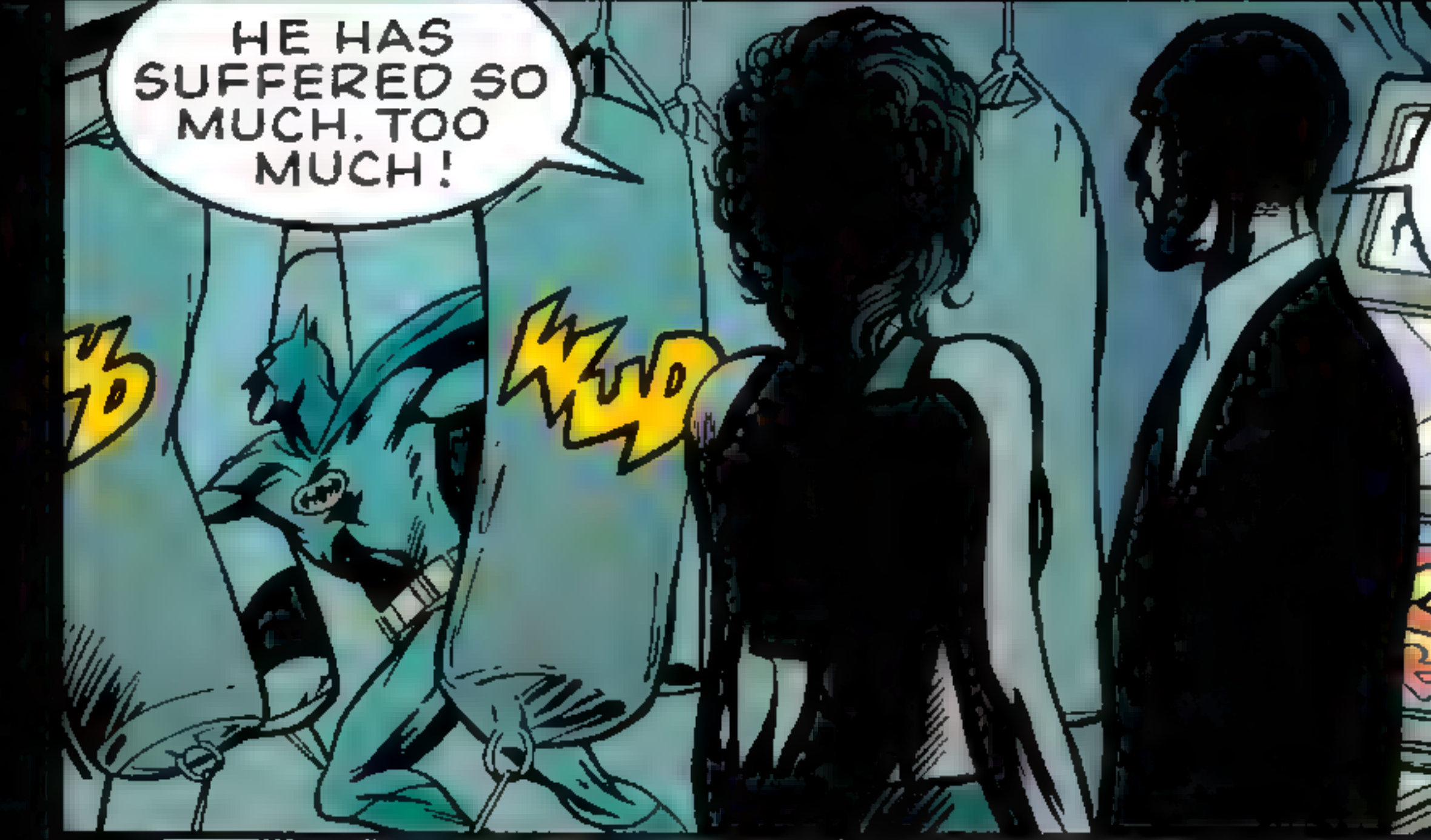
HE DOES NOT WISH TO TAINT THE LEAGUE'S REPUTATION--

HE WAS RIGHT TO KILL THE JOKER.



THE COURTS MIGHT HAVE DECLARED HIS ACTIONS A JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDE, BUT MASTER BRUCE KNOWS WHAT WAS IN HIS HEART...

... AND HE HAS JUDGED HIMSELF AS HARSHLY AS HE WOULD JUDGE OTHERS.



HE HAS SUFFERED SO MUCH. TOO MUCH!



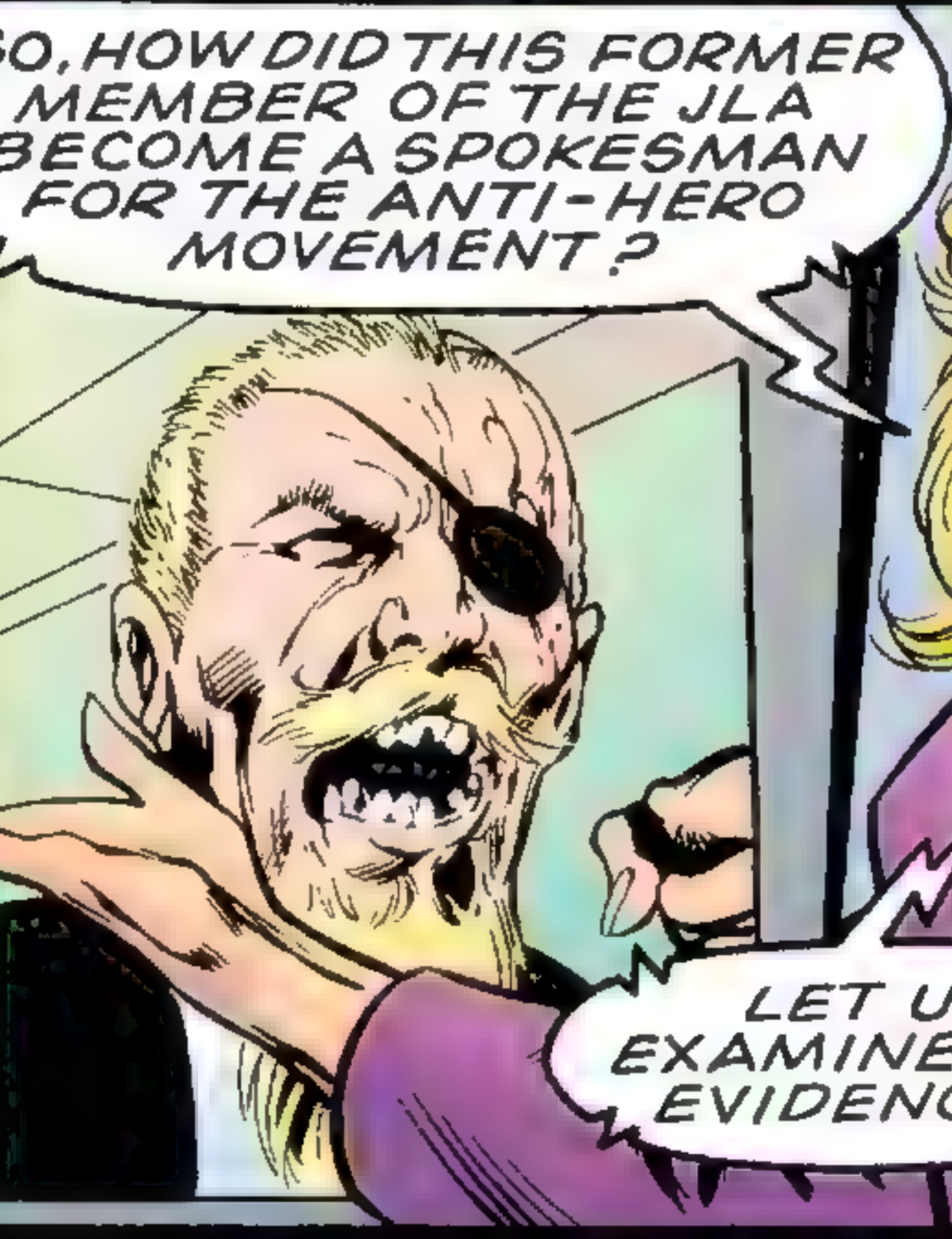
INDEED. A LESSER MAN WOULD HAVE BEEN DESTROYED.

ALL META-HUMANS ARE ALIENS!

OLIVER QUEEN...

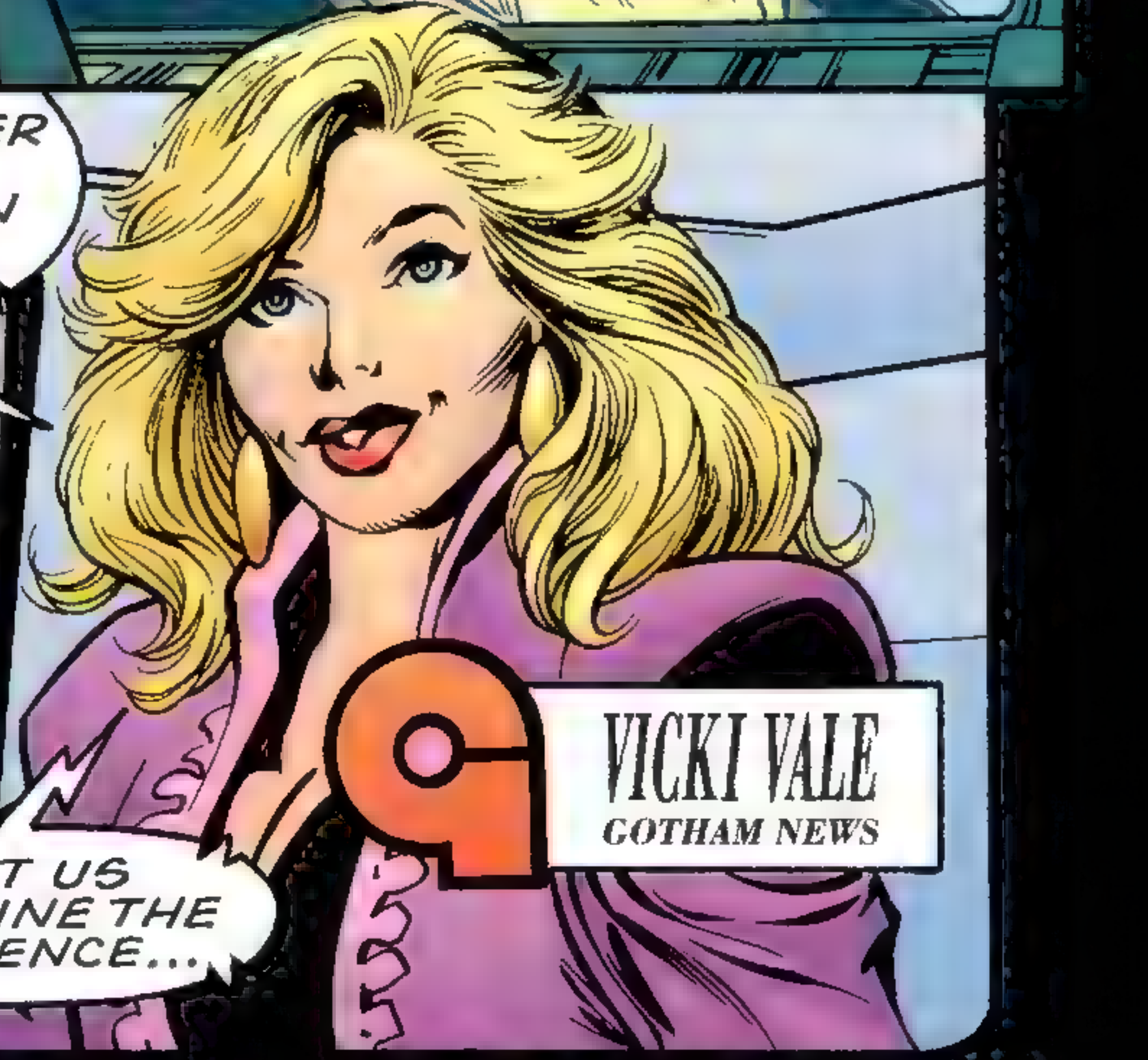


... AKA. GREEN ARROW. BILLIONAIRE PLAYBOY AND HEROIC ADVENTURER. HE HAD IT ALL.




SO, HOW DID THIS FORMER MEMBER OF THE JLA BECOME A SPOKESMAN FOR THE ANTI-HERO MOVEMENT?

LET US EXAMINE THE EVIDENCE...

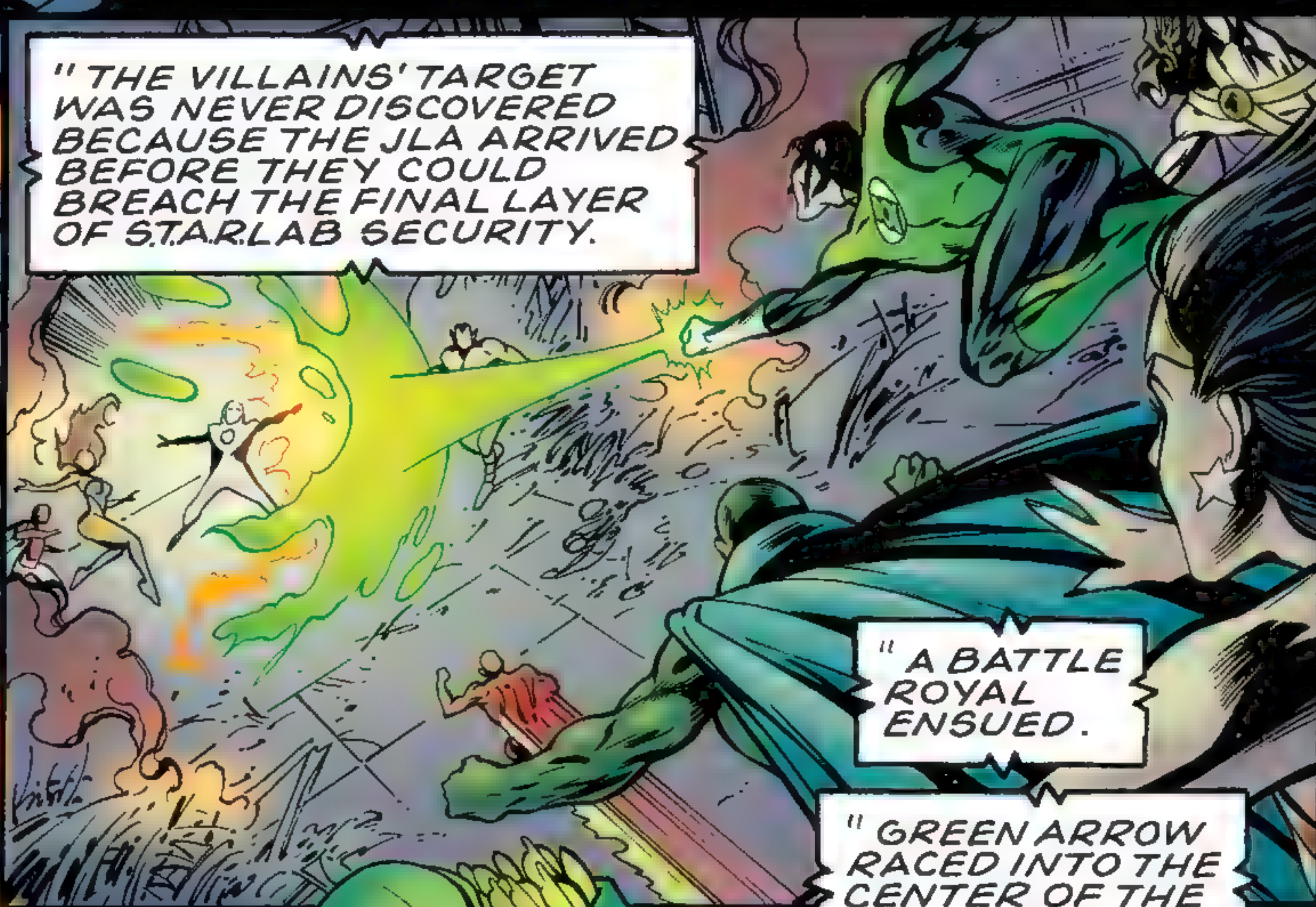


VICKI VALE
GOTHAM NEWS



"FIVE YEARS AGO, THE TIME COMMANDER AND HIS WARPISTS ATTACKED THE TOP SECRET STARLAB RESEARCH FACILITY IN CENTRAL CITY.

"WAS IT COINCIDENCE THAT STARLAB WAS A COMPETITOR OF A COMPANY TO WHICH QUEEN WAS A SIGNIFICANT SHAREHOLDER?"




"THE VILLAINS' TARGET WAS NEVER DISCOVERED BECAUSE THE JLA ARRIVED BEFORE THEY COULD BREACH THE FINAL LAYER OF STARLAB SECURITY.

"A BATTLE ROYAL ENSUED.

"GREEN ARROW RACED INTO THE CENTER OF THE CONFLICT.



"A MAN WITH A BOW AND ARROW. WHAT DID HE HOPE TO ACHIEVE?"



ARROW, THIS IS TURNING NASTY. GREEN LANTERN SAID TO LEAVE IT TO HIM. LET ME GET YOU OUT OF HERE.



NO WAY, HAWKMAN! I DIDN'T EARN MY MEMBERSHIP IN THE JLA BY WAITING IN THE WINGS.

ARROW! NO...



...AMAZO
HAS FLANKED
US.

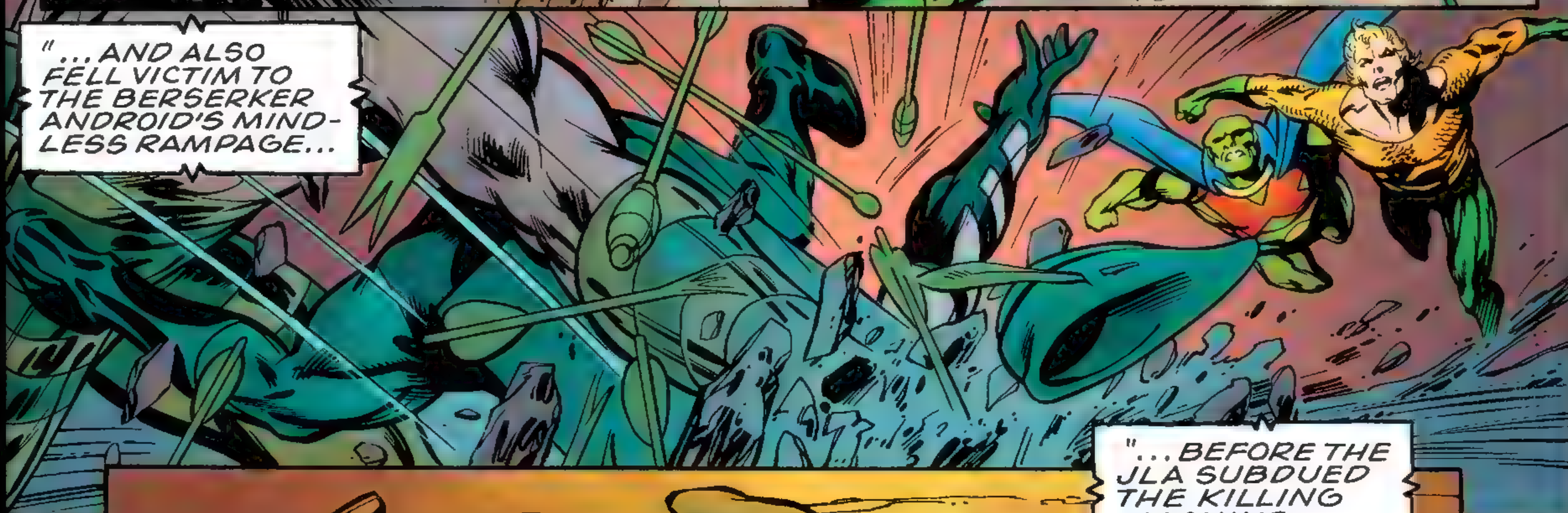
GET OUT
OF HERE,
OLIVER!

KATAR!

"HAWKMAN LEAPT
TO DEFEND HIS TEAM-
MATE--AND DIED!"

"BUT FOR
SOME REASON
GREEN ARROW
HESITATED..."

"...AND ALSO
FELL VICTIM TO
THE BERSERKER
ANDROID'S MIND-
LESS RAMPAGE..."



"...BEFORE THE
JLA SUBDUED
THE KILLING
MACHINE."

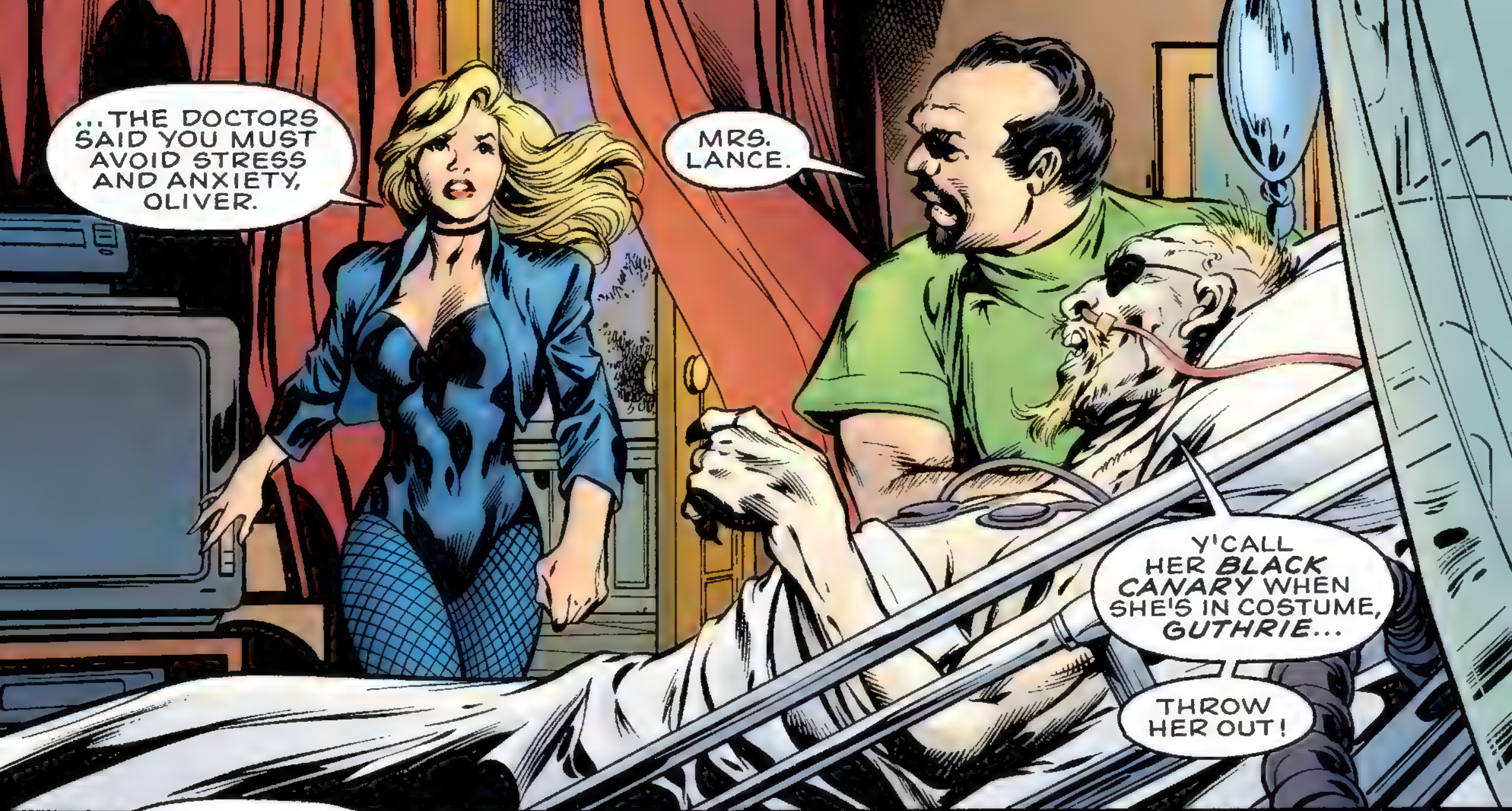
"SO, OLIVER
QUEEN,
TRAGIC
HERO..."

...LIMELIGHT-
SEEKING
ADVENTURER...

...OR WERE
HIS MOTIVES
SOMETHING MORE
SINISTER--?

WHY DO
YOU TORTURE
YOURSELF LIKE
THIS...?

KLIK



...THE DOCTORS SAID YOU MUST AVOID STRESS AND ANXIETY, OLIVER.

MRS. LANCE.

Y'CALL HER **BLACK CANARY** WHEN SHE'S IN COSTUME, GUTHRIE...

THROW HER OUT!



I'M AFRAID HE IS DETERIORATING.

HEY?... I PAY YOU, NURSE... NOT HER!

YOU CAN GO, GUTHRIE. I'LL SIT WITH HIM FOR A WHILE.

NO, DINAH, JUST GO! PLEASE...

GO... HAVE AN ADVENTURE WITH ALL YOUR **SUPER-FRIENDS**.



THEY'RE YOUR FRIENDS TOO... IF YOU'D LET THEM BE--

I DON'T WANT ANYONE.

I JUST WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE...



... TO DIE IN PEACE.

I WON'T EVER LEAVE YOU, OLIVER...

... AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU DIE.



THE AHK-TON
PYRAMID, EGYPT.

...THE
MYSTICAL ENERGY
THAT TRANSFORMED
REX MASON INTO
METAMORPHO
BINDS HIS ESSENCE
TO THIS ANCIENT
EDIFICE.

DO YOU
THINK YOU
CAN BRING
HIM BACK,
**DOCTOR
FATE?**

NOT IF HE
IS DEAD, **GEO-
FORCE.**

HE CAN'T BE
DEAD, **LIGHTNING.**
REX COULD EXIST
IN A GASEOUS FORM.
WHEN HIS BODY WAS
DISCORPORATED HE
WOULDN'T HAVE
DIED.

IT'S OKAY,
SAPPHIRE. THE
DOC UNDER-
STANDS.

INDEED. YOUR
HUSBAND'S CONSCIOUS-
NESS MAY STILL EXIST IN
MOLECULES TOO WIDELY
DISPERSED FOR HIS SPIRIT
TO COALESCE.

MY DIMENSIONAL
PLANE HAD NONE OF
THIS SPOOKY MAGIC,
KATANA. I DO NOT
LIKE IT.

YES, THERE IS
A PRESENCE...

... STRUGGLING...

...INTENSIFYING
THE VORTEX...

PERHAPS
WITH A LITTLE
ASSISTANCE HE
CAN RE-FORM.

NOR DO I,
SHADE. BUT REX
WAS AN **OUTSIDER.**
AND WE ARE FORTU-
NATE THAT **DOCTOR
FATE** AGREED TO
HELP US.



GREAT
META!

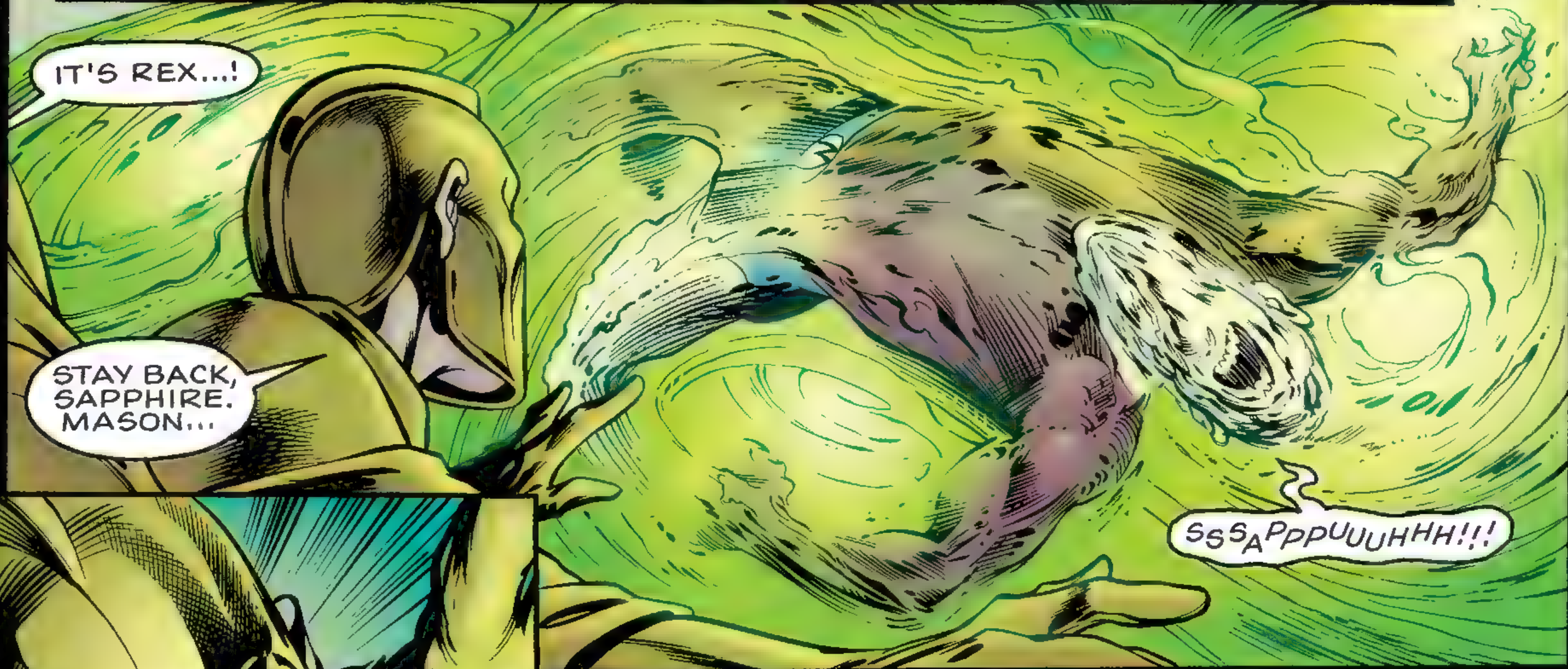
EASY,
HONEY.

BUT IT IS...

CAN IT
BE?

IT MOST
CERTAINLY
CAN.

IT IS!



IT'S REX...!

STAY BACK,
SAPPHIRE.
MASON...

SSSAPPPUUUHHH!!!



SOMETHING
IS A MISS...

... ANOTHER
PRESENCE
DRAWS ON THE
VORTEX...



...INTENSIFYING
THE NEXUS...

... TO OPEN
A PORTAL!

SOMETHING
IS COMING
THROUGH...



... SOME-
THING
EVIL--

OA.

THE FUNCTION OF THE BATTERY ITSELF IS BEYOND OUR UNDERSTANDING SO WE CANNOT EVEN DIS- CERN IF THE POWER DRAIN IS REAL...

THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO EVIDENCE OF AN INTRUSION BY NEW GOD TECHNOLOGY.

BUT WE ASSUME YOU HAD ALREADY CONCLUDED THAT...

BECAUSE, UNLESS YOU WERE CHECKING OUT MY WIFE'S SENSATIONAL CONTOURS...

WE HAD HOPED THAT YOUR UNIQUE BONDING OF RING AND MOTHER BOX MIGHT DETECT SOMETHING THAT ELUDED US.

...THIS WAS ALL A PLOY TO KEEP US DISTRACTED WHILE YOU SCANNED US.

I'D HAVE THOUGHT BIG BRAINS LIKE YOU WOULD REALIZE THIS SNEAKY STUFF COULDN'T WORK WITH A COUPLE RAISED ON APOKOLIPS. YOU'RE NOT EVEN VERY GOOD AT IT.

THIS IS A SINGULAR CRISIS AND ALL POSSIBILITIES MUST BE INVESTIGATED... AND YOU HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO MAINTAIN A MOST UNIQUE CONNECTION TO THE CORPS.

BUT YOU ARE CORRECT, WE HAVE ACTED BADLY.

WE BELIEVED OURSELVES NEAR OMNIPOTENT... AND HAD FORGOTTEN WHAT IT IS TO FEAR THE UNKNOWN...

...AND AN OPPONENT WHOSE POWER MAY EXCEED OUR OWN.

THE ANDES,
PERU.

...I SHOULD
BE ABLE TO
IDENTIFY ANY SIGN
OF NEW GOD
ACTIVITY...

...I STUDIED
ALL OF THE OAN
DATA BASE ON
THE NEW GODS
LAST NIGHT.

THERE WERE
HUNDREDS OF
THOUSANDS OF
PAGES.

SEVEN
HUNDRED AND
FIFTY THOUSAND
NINE HUNDRED
AND FOUR.

I CAN
CONDUCT THE
SEARCH ALONG-
SIDE MY PROJECT
TO SCAN FOR POTEN-
TIAL AVALANCHE
SITES AND FUSE
UNSTABLE
ROCK.

PREVENTION
IS ALWAYS
PREFERABLE
TO CURE.

THIS IS ALL VERY
COMMENDABLE,
KAL...

...BUT
YOU SHOULD
TAKE TIME
TO RE--

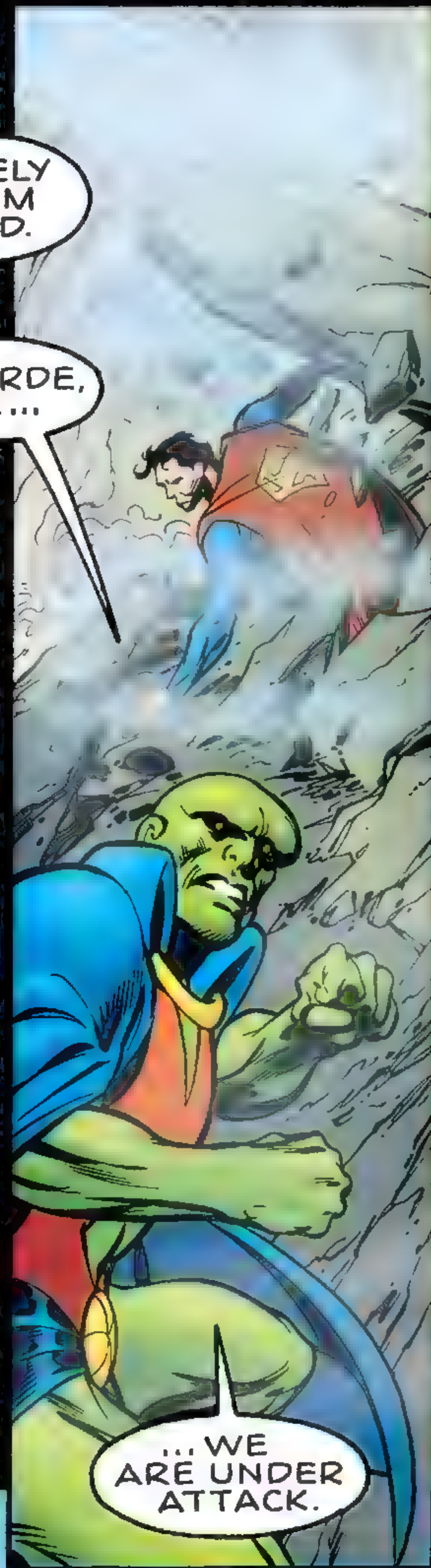
THAT WAS EASY,
DESPERO. I TOLD THE
MASTERS YOU WOULD
NOT BE REQUIRED.

YOU HAVE
AN OVERBLOWN
OPINION OF YOUR
MEAGER ABILITIES,
EVIL STAR...



... YOU MERELY
CAUGHT HIM
OFF GUARD.

EN GARDE,
KAL...



... WE
ARE UNDER
ATTACK.



YOU ARE OF
NO INTEREST TO US,
MA'ALACANDRIAN.

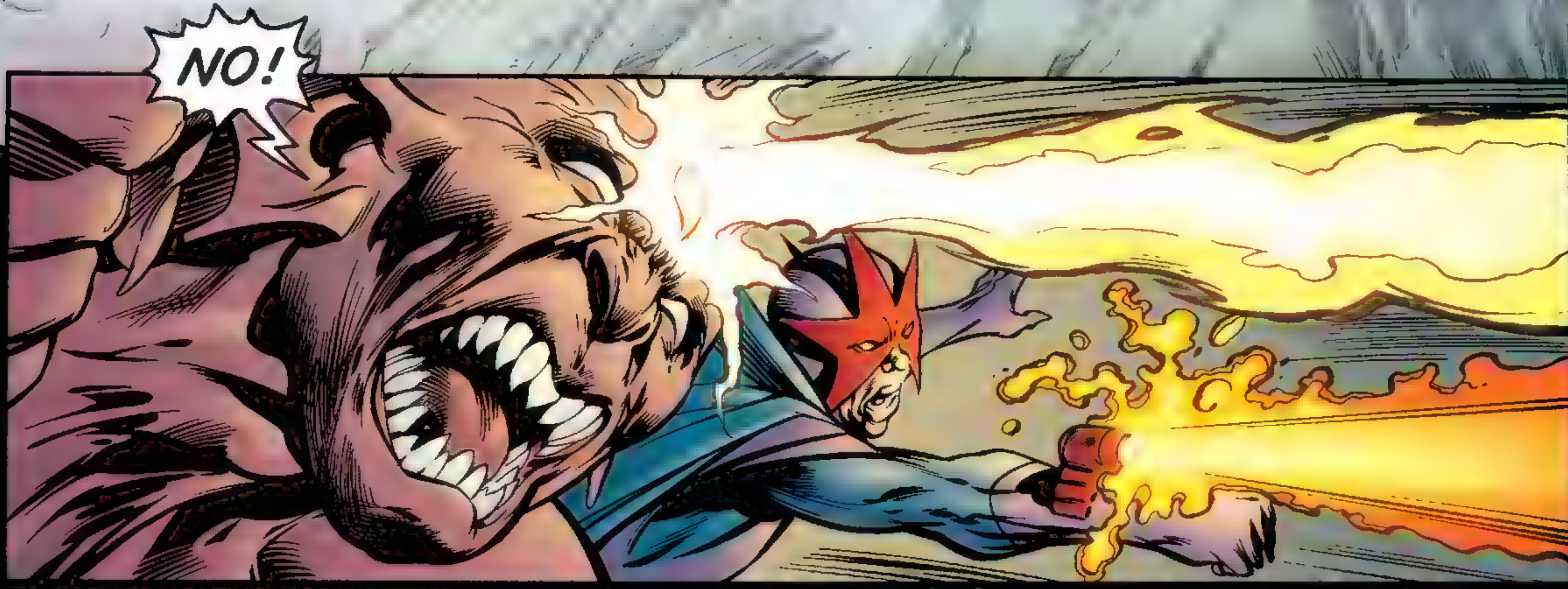


WE ARE HERE
TO TEST THE
KRYPTONIAN.



I DON'T
KNOW YOU.
OR THE REASON
FOR YOUR
ATTACK.

ARE YOU
WILLING TO
TALK?



NO!

MADAM XANADU'S RESIDENCE, METROPOLIS.

THE FUTURE IS NOT CARVED IN STONE BUT WRITTEN ON SHIFTING SAND...

... AND WE ARE ENTERING A PERIOD OF GREAT UNCERTAINTY, GREEN LANTERN. I SEE NOTHING THAT WOULD AID IN YOUR QUEST.

IT WAS A LONG SHOT, MADAM XANADU.

BUT YOUR MYSTIC TAROT'S PREDICTIONS HAVE HELPED IN THE PAST...

... SO IT WAS WORTH A TRY.

ENTER FREELY AND UNAFRAID

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.

YES, OF COURSE... I'M SORRY I COULDN'T HELP.

IT IS DONE. I HAVE BETRAYED MY SACRED TRUST AND LIED TO ONE WHO CAME WITH FAITH AND HOPE FOR TRUTH.

IT WAS NECESSARY, SISTER.

ON THAT I MUST TRUST YOU.

YOU HAVE SEEN WHAT IS TO BE AND KNOW THAT I ALONE CAN CHANGE THE PATTERN.

NO ONE CAN BE PERMITTED TO INTERFERE, ESPECIALLY THE JLA.

THEY COULD NEVER ACCEPT THAT ONE IN THEIR RANKS MUST DIE.

PERU.

THIS FIGHT IS
UNNECESSARY
AND FUTILE--

I'M ONLY
WARMING
UP.

KAL, I REALLY DO APPRECIATE
YOUR RELUCTANCE TO RESORT
TO VIOLENCE BUT THE STAKES
HAVE CHANGED...

WE HAVE
DRIFTED INTO
AN INHABITED
REGION. INNOCENT
LIVES ARE AT
RISK.

I GIVE YOU
ATTACKERS FAIR
WARNING THAT I
WILL ALLOW NO
HARM TO BEFALL
THOSE BENEATH
US. THIS COMBAT
MUST END...
NOW!

IT ENDS
WHEN YOU ARE
DEFEATED.

THEN I
AM SORRY...



... BUT YOU
LEAVE ME NO
CHOICE.

MY
STARBAND!



YOU ARE BEATEN. NOW TELL ME WHY YOU ATTACKED?

MY STARBAND IS DISABLED, BUT I'M NOT BEATEN.

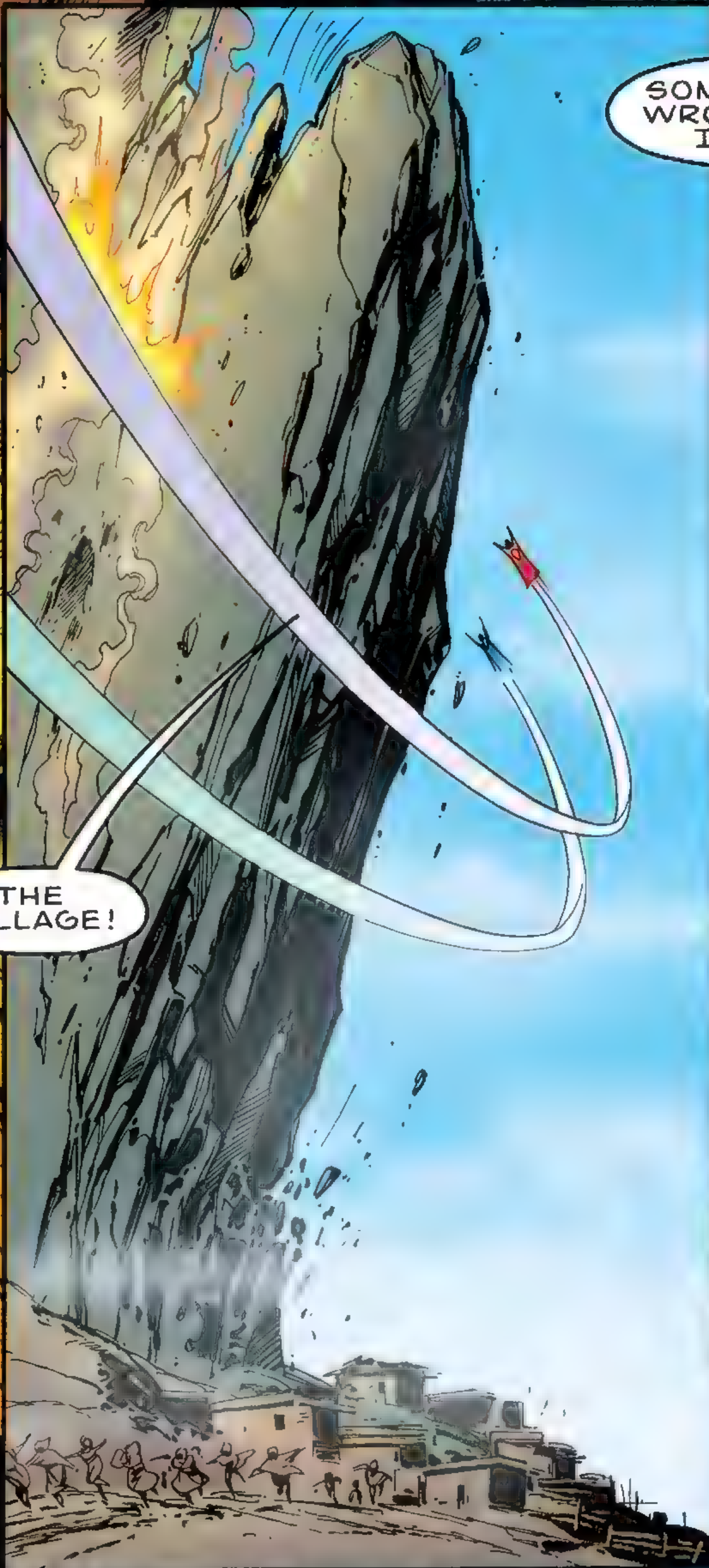


NOT WHILE MY **STARLINGS** REMAIN UNDER MY TELEPATHIC CONTROL.

THEY ARE ENERGY CONSTRUCTS...



"...EXPENDABLE AND HIGHLY VOLATILE."



THE VILLAGE!



SOMETHING'S WRONG, J'ONN. I FEEL...

WEAK...

THE VILLAGERS ARE ALMOST CLEAR, KAL. JUST HANG ON...



COAST CITY.

... NEVER DID FIGURE OUT WHAT THE ALIEN CRITTER I FOUGHT WAS DOIN' HERE.

IT JUST VANISHED WHEN I BEAT IT.

BUT THAT WAS WELL OVER A YEAR AGO, LANTERN. CAN'T BE ANY CLUES LEFT.

THERE IS AN ENERGY RESIDUE, RAGMAN. TOO DEGRADED TO TRACK.

STAR CITY.

NEW GODS, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT...

... BUT I DID HEAR A RUMOR ABOUT YOUR GAL, STAR SAPPHIRE.

SHE'S NOT MY GAL, CREEPER.

YEAH, WELL... THE WORD IS SHE'S TEAMED UP WITH SOME OTHER HOT BABES. SO IF YOU NEED ANY HELP WITH THEM...?

CENTRAL CITY.

... WILDCAT, I SWEAR... I'M ON A MISSION FOR THE CORPS.

I JUST WANTED TO KNOW IF YOU'D COME ACROSS ANYTHING WEIRD THAT MIGHT BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE NEW GODS?

AW, C'MON, GL. THAT'S BIG TIME. I'M A SMALL-TIME CRIMEFIGHTER... YOU KNOW, DOWN AND DIRTY...

SO DON'T BE SHY. TELL ME WHY YOU REALLY WANTED TO SEE ME...?

KEYSTONE CITY.

DARKSEID? I NEVER HEARD OF THE DUDE, DOVE...

... AND THE JLA WILL NEVER LET US JOIN IF WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO THE BAD GUYS ARE!

I TOLD YOU ABOUT HIM, HAWK.

NAH Y'DIDN'T.

I DID!

YOU CALLING ME A LIAR?

THANKS FOR THE... EH... HELP, GUYS.

THE JLA SATELLITE.

THE DUMBBELLS ARE AT MAXIMUM GRAV-RESISTANCE, KAL, AND YOUR BIO-READINGS HAVE BARELY FLUCTUATED.

I FEEL FINE, J'ONN. I TOLD YOU, WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ME LOOKED WORSE THAN IT WAS.

I WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT, BUT WE HAVE NO BASE LINE DATA FOR KRYPTONIAN PHYSIOLOGY. NO IDEA HOW YOUR POWERS ARE GENERATED.

PERHAPS THERE IS A THRESH-OLD. SOME LIMIT TO YOUR ENERGY RESOURCE.

THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT. TO RESUME MY MISSION--

NO. IT WAS SHEER LUCK THAT NO ONE WAS INJURED IN THE AVALANCHE. IF YOUR POWERS WERE TO FAIL AGAIN, YOU MAY NOT BE SO FORTUNATE.

YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING NONSTOP FOR A YEAR, KAL. YOU MUST REST.

I REQUIRE LITTLE SLEEP AND I WOULD NOT BEGIN TO KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH TIME OFF.

THAT IS THE PROBLEM. UNLIKE THE REST OF THE JLA, YOU HAVE NEVER TAKEN A SECRET IDENTITY.

YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN WHAT IT IS TO LIVE LIKE AN ORDINARY PERSON.

MY LIFE WAS NEVER ORDINARY. ON THE FARM I HID MY POWERS. WHO...WHAT I WAS.

WHEN MARTHA KENT FIRST PRESENTED THIS COSTUME TO ME, I WORE IT ONLY SO AS NOT TO OFFEND HER... OR THAT IS WHAT I TOLD MYSELF.

PERHAPS THE TRUTH IS, I WAS ASHAMED OF HAVING IGNORED MY RESPONSIBILITY TO HUMANITY AND I WANTED TO CHANGE...

NOW *THIS* IS WHO I AM.

NO, YOU ARE MORE, MUCH MORE. YOU NEED TO TAKE TIME TO REALIZE THAT. YOU NEED A VACATION, A RESPIRE FROM EARTH MATTERS.

BUT WHAT IF THERE IS--

A CRISIS? I HAVE ALREADY ADDRESSED THAT QUESTION.

HALO, THE ASTRAL MAGE, AND FIRESTORM. ALL THREE HAD ALREADY APPLIED FOR JLA MEMBERSHIP.

NONE POSSESS YOUR LEVEL OF POWER, BUT TOGETHER WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO COPE WITH ANYTHING THAT ARISES.

AND IF WE CANNOT, YOU HAVE MY WORD THAT I WILL CALL ON YOU IMMEDIATELY.

NOW GO, KAL. FOR ONE WEEK.

FIND YOURSELF.

THE VEGA SYSTEM.
APOKOLIPS OUT-
POST EPSILON 5.

SUPERMAN
IS INDEED
POWERFUL.

NO, GRACE!
DESPERO AND EVIL
STAR ARE WEAK FOOLS.
YOU SHOULD USE YOUR
WITCH WAYS TO
ENTHRALL WORTHY
SLAVES FOR ME.

BUT KALIBAK,
SUPERMAN COULD
BE "THE ONE."

"THE ONE"?

I AM TIRED
OF HIDING IN
EXILE WHILE YOU
FAIL TO FIND THIS
MYSTERIOUS
"ONE!"

I TREMBLE
AT YOUR
MIGHT.

YOU ARE
GREATER THAN
YOUR FATHER
DARKSEID.

HE FEARED THE
ONE SO MUCH HE
HID THE KNOWL-
EDGE OF IT.

AND
LAUNCHED A
DOOMSDAY
DEVICE.

AYE, BUT
I CAN CONTROL
THE ONE, MAKE
HIM MY...YOUR
SERVANT.

FORGIVE ME,
MY MASTER.

WE ALONE OF
APOKOLIPS' ELITE
REMAIN.

ALONE,
YES.

IS IT
NOT WISE TO
PROCEED WITH
CAUTION?

CAUTION...
YES.

THEN WE
MUST SECURE
EARTH AGENTS
TO SERVE OUR
CAUSE.

THE LABORATORY OF
DR. WILL MAGNUS.

INCREDIBLE!

THIS IS
WRONG,
DOC.

AH, MY
METAL MEN...
IS THERE A
PROBLEM?

YA PROMISED THE
JLA Y'D DISMANTLE
THE AMAZO ANDROID.

BUT
SUPERIOR
TO US, EH?

IT'S D-D-
DANGEROUS.

IS *MERCURY*
CORRECT, DOC?

OF COURSE NOT,
GOLD! THE FLASH
PULLED HIS BRAIN
OUT. AMAZO IS
JUST SCRAP.

TELL
THEM,
WILL.

I HOPED TO DISCOVER
WHATEVER FLUKE
IN THE ANDROID'S
DESIGN ALLOWS IT TO
IMITATE THE BIOLOGY
AND ABILITIES OF
ANY METAHUMANS
IT TOUCHES.

THAT'S 5000
CLEVER, WILL.

BIO-ENERGY?
ISN'T ALL ENERGY
THE SAME?

NO. SOME
METAHUMANS
POSSESS ENERGETIC
CAPABILITIES THAT
DEFY HUMAN
LOGIC...

NO NEED
TO BE JEALOUS,
PLATINUM. MY
INTEREST IS
PURELY
SCIENTIFIC.

AMAZO
WAS CREATED BY
A STRANGE OLD BIRD,
PROFESSOR IVO. HE
WAS AN ARCHAEOLO-
GIST... THEN HE
SUDDENLY DEVELOPED
THIS BIZARRE SCIENCE.
SHOULDN'T WORK...
BUT IT DOES.

HMMM.
WHAT'S EVEN
MORE REMARK-
ABLE IS THAT IT
CAN ABSORB
BIO-ENERGY.



BLACK ORCHID, POWERGIRL. KEEP THE ROBOTS BUSY WHILE I COLLECT AMAZO.

IT'LL BE A REAL PLEASURE, SAPPHIRE.

SK

KR

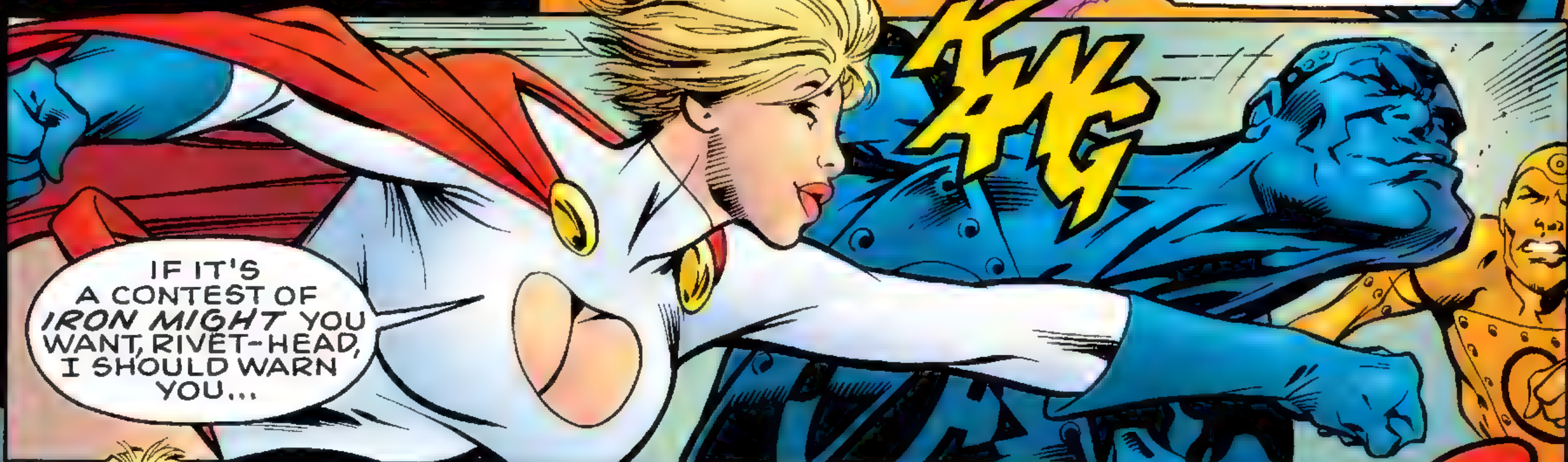


Y-YOU
CAN'T T-TAKE
AMAZO...B-BBAD
LADY.



YOU'RE
OUT OF YOUR
CLASS, TIN
MAN.

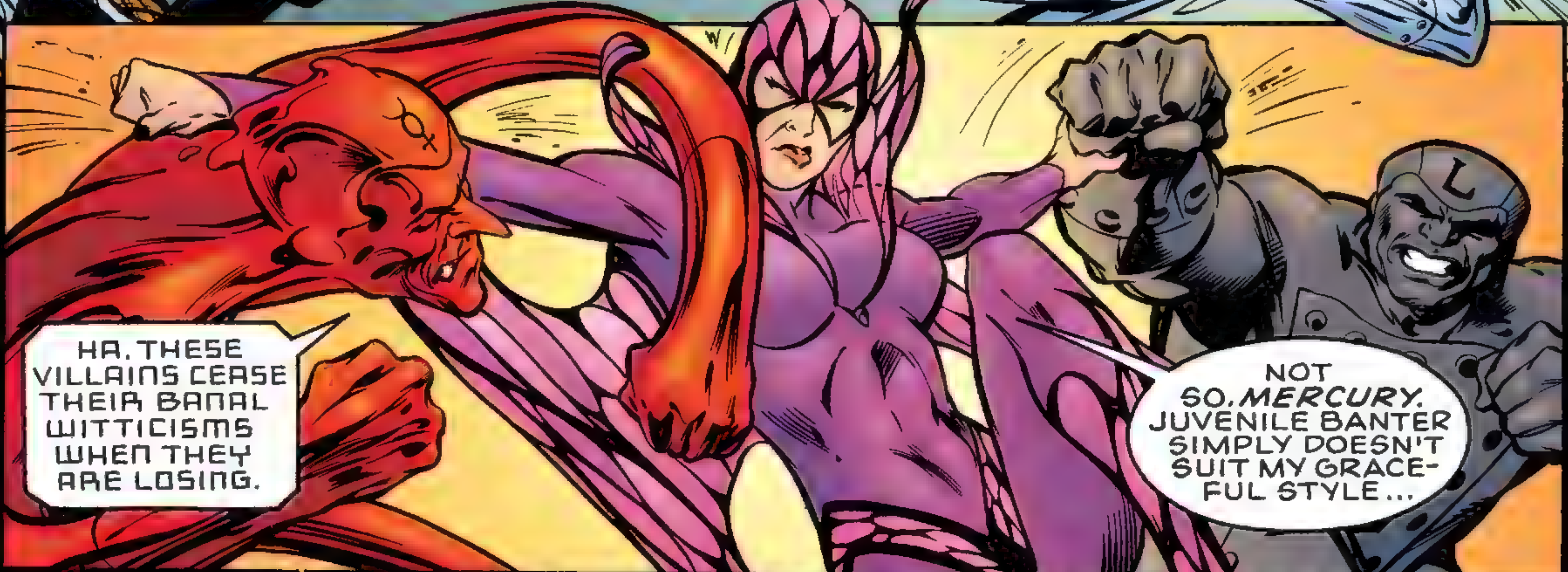
THE LITTLE GUY
MIGHT NOT BE UP
TO YOUR FIGHTIN'
WEIGHT, STAR
SAPPHIRE. WANNA
TRY ME?



IF IT'S
A CONTEST OF
IRON MIGHT YOU
WANT, RIVET-HEAD,
I SHOULD WARN
YOU...



...I'LL
ALWAYS
TAKE THE
GOLD...
...AND
PLATINUM.



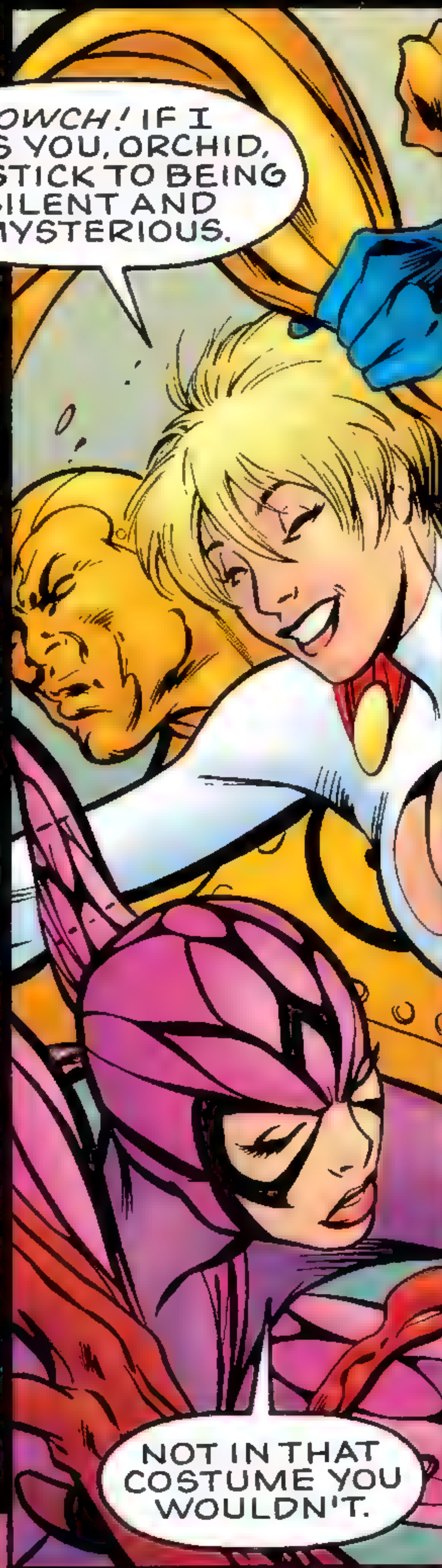
HA. THESE
VILLAINS CEASE
THEIR BANAL
WITTICISMS
WHEN THEY
ARE LOSING.

NOT
SO, MERCURY.
JUVENILE BANTER
SIMPLY DOESN'T
SUIT MY GRACE-
FUL STYLE...

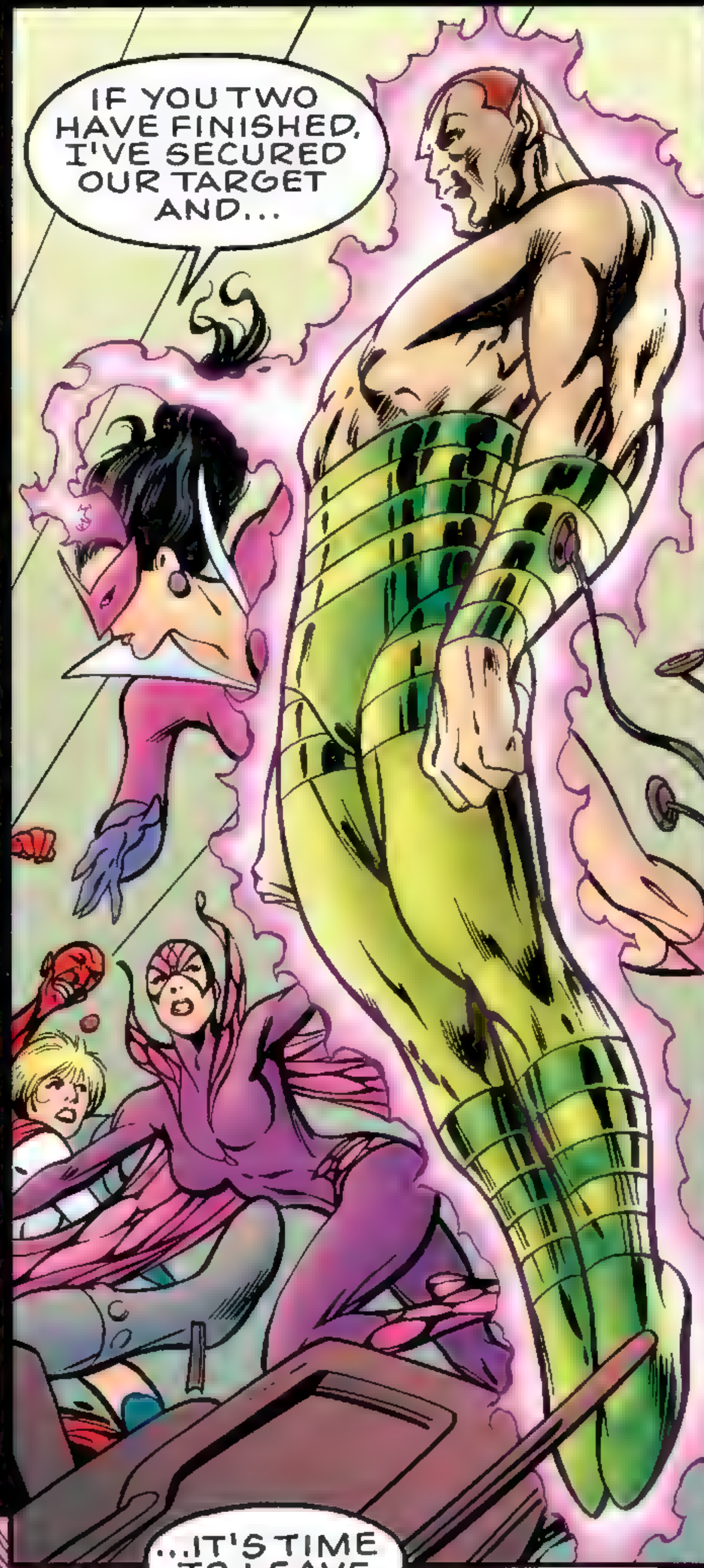


...IT'S SO LEADEN.

YOWCH! IF I WAS YOU, ORCHID, I'D STICK TO BEING SILENT AND MYSTERIOUS.

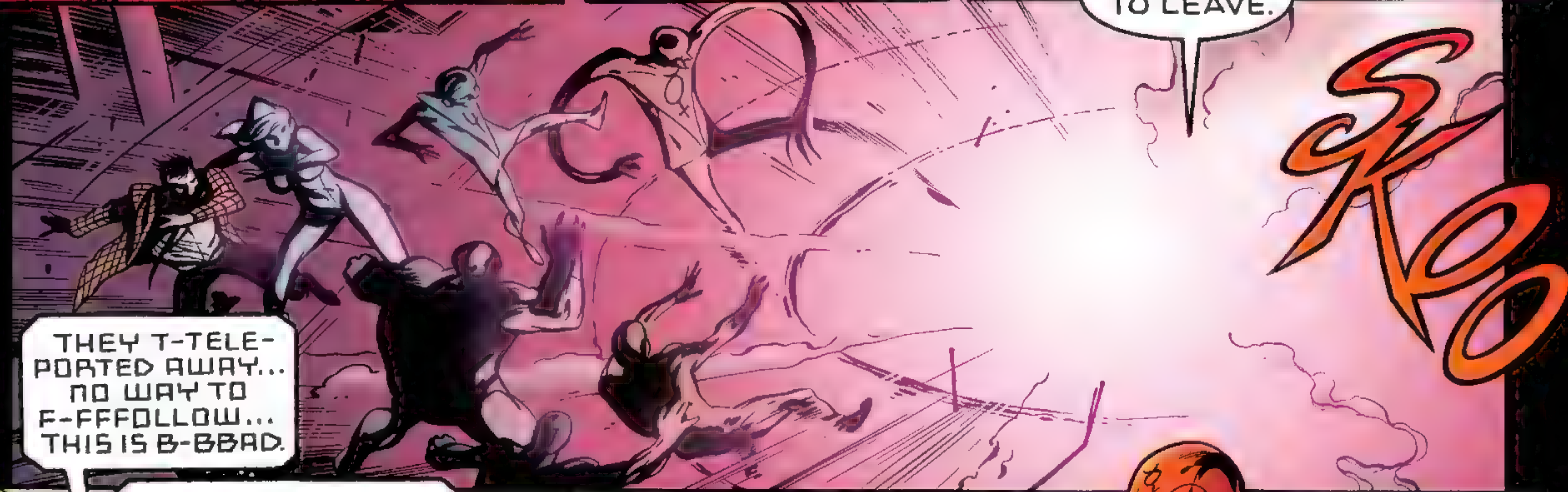


NOT IN THAT COSTUME YOU WOULDN'T.



IF YOU TWO HAVE FINISHED, I'VE SECURED OUR TARGET AND...

...IT'S TIME TO LEAVE.



THEY T-TELE-PORTED AWAY... NO WAY TO F-FFFFOLLOW... THIS IS B-BBAD.



BUT WE'RE ALL OKAY. THEY ONLY GOT THAT NASTY ROBOT WITHOUT A BRAIN.

OBVIOUSLY THEY...OR WHOEVER SENT THEM HAS A WAY OF REACTIVATING AMAZO.

UH-OH.

WE'D BETTER ALERT THE JLA...

MIDWAY CITY.

I COULD
REALLY USE YOUR
TECHNICAL APTITUDE
NOW, KATAR MY
LOVE.

IT'S
BEEN SOME TIME
SINCE I'VE NEEDED
TO SET MY HELMET
LENSES TO SCAN
FOR SUCH A WIDE
SPECTRUM...

... AND
WHAT I'VE FOUND
IS VERY STRANGE. NOT
SO MUCH A SPECIFIC
WAVELENGTH AS AN
AREA OF NONSPECIFIC
DISTORTION.

NO POINT
SPECULATING.
ONLY ONE WAY TO
FIND THE CAUSE.
FOLLOW IT...

SOMETHING
HAS PASSED THIS
WAY RECENTLY
SO I MUST BE
GETTING...

... STRAIGHT
TO ITS SOURCE.
A DISUSED WARE-
HOUSE. HOW
CLICHÉ.

... CLOSE!

LOOK
SEE FOR I,
WING-WING
WOMAN...



SAVE I
HUNTING
VICTIM-
FOOD.



MM.
TASTY SMELL.
SLOBBER
NICE.



REGNUH
NOMED...
...EMUSNOC
FLESYHT!



ZATANNA.
THANK
YOU, BUT
HOW...?

I WAS
ALREADY
TRACKING THE
DEMON WHEN
YOU FOUND
ITS TRAIL.

BUT YOU FLY
CONSIDERABLY
FASTER THAN
I.

THAT
PARTICULAR
MATERIALIZATION
WAS A MINOR ENTITY...
ONE OF MANY I HAVE
DISPATCHED OVER
THE LAST FEW
DAYS.



I DON'T KNOW
HOW THEY REACHED THIS
PLANE, BUT I FEAR THEY
ARE MERELY THE VAN-
GUARD OF A GREATER
POWER.

A SHADOW
FALLS ACROSS
OUR WORLD
AND...

"...EVIL FORCES
ARE RUNNING
RAMPANT."

BATMAN,
HELP...

BRUCE...
THE PAIN...

PLEASE,
JOKER. LET
THEM GO.

IF YOU DON'T
APPRECIATE THE
ART, THINK OF IT
AS AN ANATOMY
LESSON.

NO!
PLEASE STOP.
I'M BEGGING
YOU, JOKER.
PLEASE.

NO, NO, NO.
YOU DON'T GET
TO LOOK AWAY,
BATMAN.

IT'S NO
FUN IF YOU
DON'T SHARE
IT WITH
ME.

SO
OPEN YOUR
EYES...

I HAVE
THE POWER
TO MAKE YOU
LOOK.



NOOO!

NO...



BRUCE!
BRUCE! ARE
YOU OKAY?

FINE.
JUST CHECKING
THE LATEST ON
POISON IVY.



YOU
PROMISED TO
COME TO BED
HOURS AGO.

I'M
SORRY...
I FELL
ASLEEP.

YOU CAN'T
KEEP PUSHING
YOURSELF. YOU
MUST REST...



YOU OF ALL PEOPLE
KNOW BETTER THAN
THAT, SELINA. I CHOSE
THIS PATH YEARS
AGO...

...AND
ALTHOUGH THE
COST HAS BEEN
HIGH...

...TOO
HIGH...



...THERE
IS NO GOING
BACK.

THE KENT FARM,
KANSAS.



YOU
SHOULD
GO BACK,
KAL.



MR. KENT...
SORRY, I...

IT'S JON... AND
THERE'S NO NEED
TO EXPLAIN, SON.
YOU'RE ALWAYS
WELCOME...



... BUT WHY
DON'T YOU GO AND
VISIT YOUR PEOPLE
INSTEAD OF LOOKING
FROM WAY OVER
HERE ?



I TURNED
MY BACK ON
THEIR SOCIETY TO
BECOME SUPERMAN.
I CAN NEVER
GO BACK.



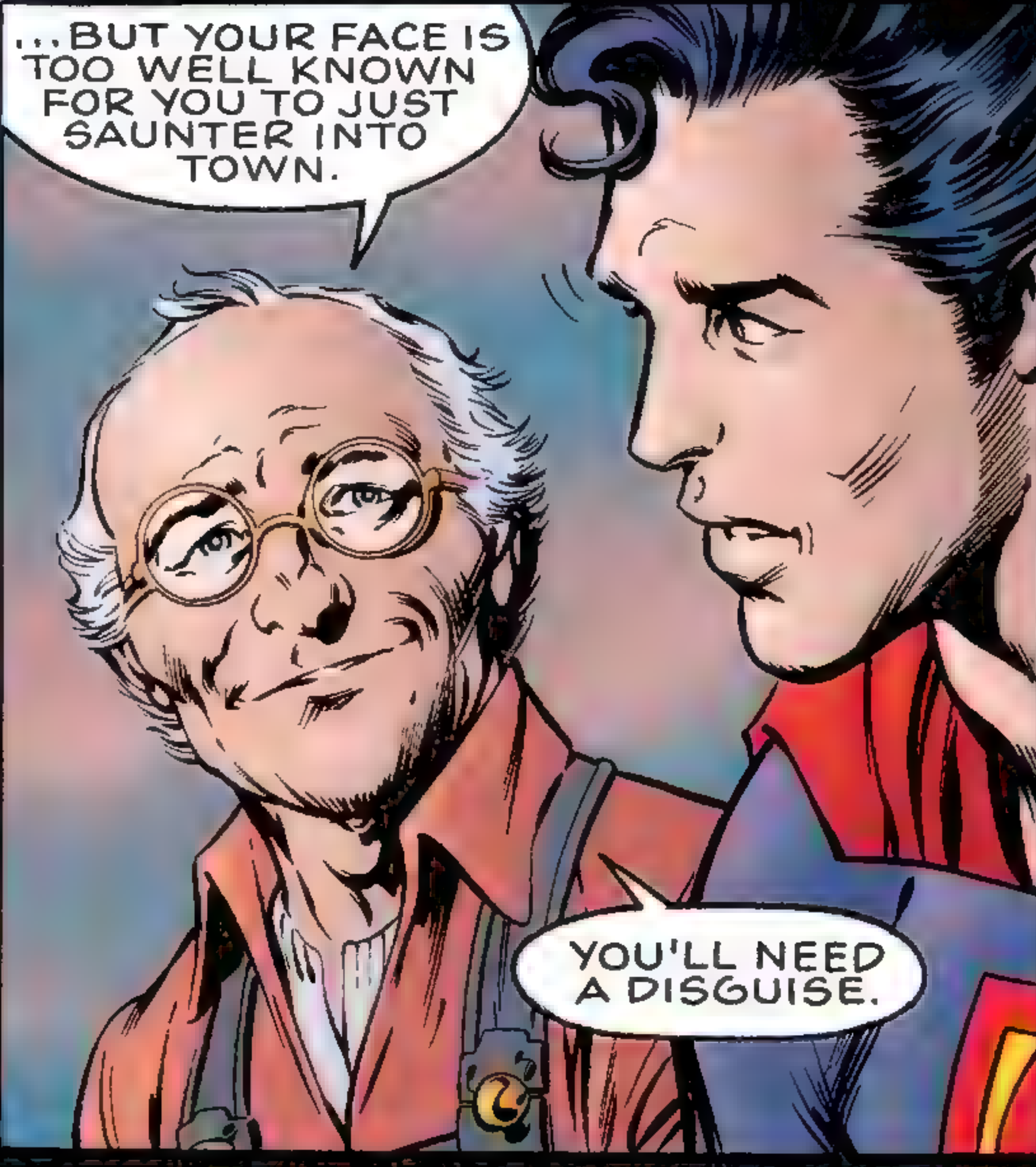
I ALWAYS
FOUND THE AMISH
TO BE A FORGIVING
PEOPLE, BUT YOU'D
KNOW BEST.

T' TELL THE
TRUTH, J'ONN
J'ONZZ CALLED TO
SAY WE SHOULD
KEEP AN EYE
OUT FOR YOU.

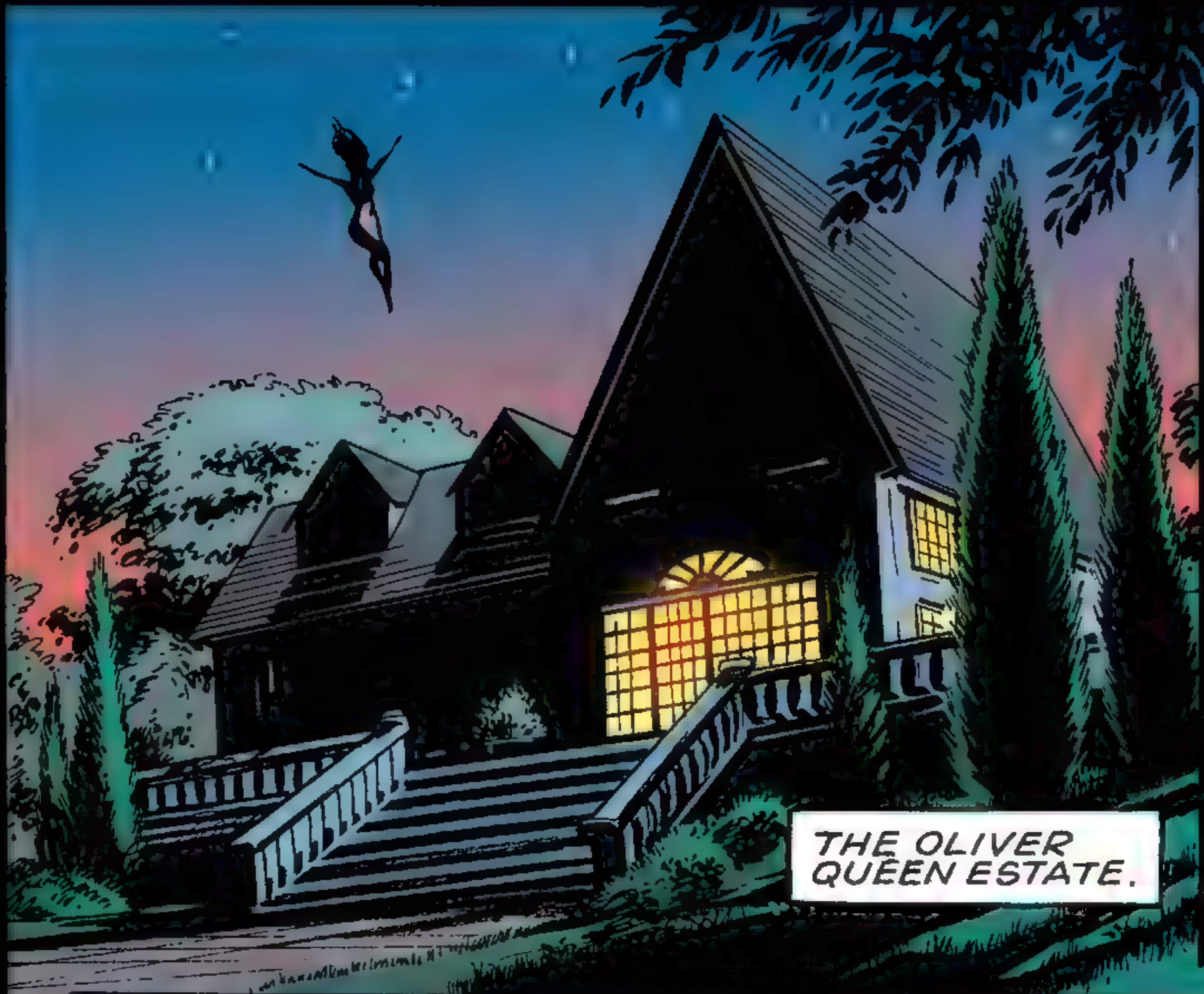
HE
INSISTED
I TAKE A
BREAK.

YEAH...
TO MIX WITH
ORDINARY FOLK,
HE SAID...

... BUT YOUR FACE IS
TOO WELL KNOWN
FOR YOU TO JUST
SAUNTER INTO
TOWN.



YOU'LL NEED
A DISGUISE.



THE OLIVER
QUEEN ESTATE.



DON'T GO
IN, DIANA OF
THEMYSCIRA.

THIS IS
THE WRONG TIME
TO FOLLOW YOUR
HEART.



PHANTOM
STRANGER.
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?

YOU MUST NOT LET YOUR DESIRE TO SHOW COMPASSION FOR A FALLEN COMRADE DIVERT YOU FROM YOUR SEARCH FOR DARKSEID'S MINIONS.

MY SEARCH BROUGHT ME CLOSE TO OLIVER'S HOME AND I THOUGHT TO TAKE A MOMENT --

A NOBLE SENTIMENT, BUT TIME IS VERY SHORT.

THEN DARKSEID DOES PRESENT AN IMMINENT THREAT?

THAT I CANNOT SAY.

CANNOT OR WILL NOT? EVERY TIME YOU OFFER AID IT IS CLEAR YOU KNOW FAR MORE THAN YOU ARE WILLING TO TELL.

THERE ARE CONSEQUENCES I MUST CONSIDER.

"CONSEQUENCES"?

... MY OWN CONSCIENCE.

... NO MATTER HOW IT MAY APPEAR.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR IRRITATION, DIANA. I WAS MORTAL ONCE.

ONCE!? WHAT ARE YOU NOW? BY WHAT AUTHORITY DO YOU INTERFERE IN THE AFFAIRS OF MAN?

THE ONLY AUTHORITY ANYONE CAN TRULY CLAIM...

DARKSEID'S GREATEST THREAT TO EARTH LIES BENEATH THE LONE HOUSE IN THE SHADOW OF SEACOAST POINT.

TRUST THAT I WORK FOR THE GOOD OF MAN, PRINCESS...



THE GLOBAL
TV OFFICE,
METROPOLIS.

THE NEW
GODS MANAGED
TO KEEP THEIR
PRESENCE ON
EARTH A
SECRET...

... UNTIL
MR. MIRACLE
AND BARDA ARRIVED
TO SPOIL THEIR
PLANS.

I COULDN'T
FIND ANYTHING
VERY INTERESTING
IN OUR ARCHIVES.

A POLICE DETECTIVE,
SERGEANT "TERRIBLE"
TURPIN, CLAIMED TO BE ON TO
SOMETHING. BUT HE DIED IN
THE LINE OF DUTY THREE
MONTHS AGO.

YOU'RE
WELCOME TO
DOWNLOAD THE
FILES BUT I'VE
GOT A PLANE
TO CATCH.

A VACATION?
I ENVY YOU.

I'M GOING TO
KANSAS. MARTHA
KENT ASKED ME
TO VISIT HER.
KAL'S THERE.

REALLY?
WELL, I SHOULD
WARN YOU THAT
J'ONN J'ONZZ WANTED
KAL TO BE LEFT IN
PEACE, NOT CHASED
AROUND BY A
JOURNALIST.

I'M NOT
GOING AFTER
A STORY.

THE VEGA SYSTEM.

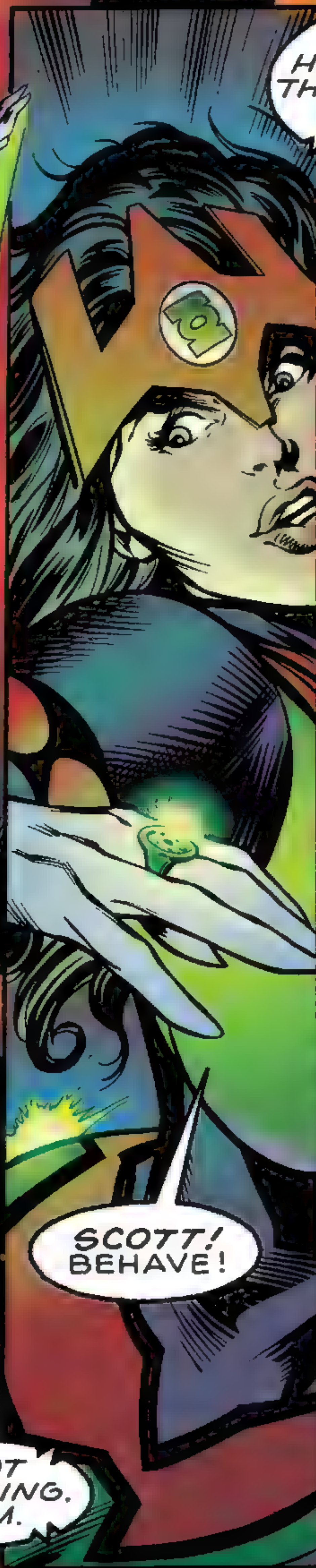
WHERE ARE WE GOING, SCOTT?



WE SHOULD BE INVESTIGATING THE LANTERN BATTERY DRAIN.

IF IT DOES FAIL YOU'LL BE STUCK AS A DIS-EMBODED LIFE FORCE INHABITING THE CIRCUITRY OF MY ARMOR.

I'M NOT COMPLAINING. MMMM.



OKAY, OKAY. HAL JORDAN REPORTED THAT DESPERO AND EVIL STAR ATTACKED SUPERMAN.

THE GUARDIANS DISMISSED THAT AS IRRELEVANT.

YES, BUT THEY SUSPECT NEW GODS ARE INVOLVED IN THE POWER DRAIN...

...AND THERE WAS AN ENERGY ECHO THAT COINCIDED WITH THE ATTACK ON SUPERMAN. A MATTER THRESHOLD TRANSPORT PULSE.

WHICH IS ONLY POSSESSED BY ELITE NEW GODS.

I PROJECTED THE THRESHOLD VECTOR TO THIS SECTOR AND SUB-SPACE DISTORTION CONFIRMS THE TERMINUS IS RIGHT AHEAD.



GRACE! IT'S BARD--



DON'T PANIC, KALIBAK. THE TREACHEROUS COW HAS MERELY DELIVERED HERSELF TO US.

YOU JUST KEEP HER DISTRACTED...

...WHILE I ENSLAVE HER MIND.





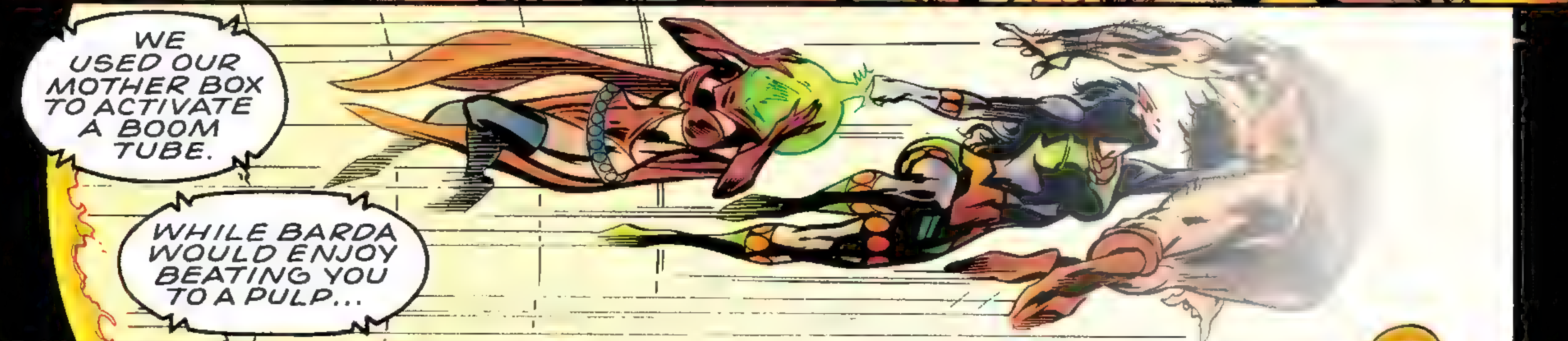
NOT
THIS TIME,
GRACE.

GAH!
GET HER...
KALIBAK.



YOUR
SNEAKY
OAN RING
WON'T
STOP
ME!

LOOK
BEHIND YOU
IF YOU WANT
TO SEE SOME-
THING SNEAKY,
DEVIANT.



WE
USED OUR
MOTHER BOX
TO ACTIVATE
A BOOM
TUBE.

WHILE BARDA
WOULD ENJOY
BEATING YOU
TO A PULP...



... WE NEED
YOU CON-
SCIOUS...

WELCOME TO
NEW GENESIS.

... AND
ABLE TO
TALK.

THE GOTHAM
HORTICULTURAL
CENTER.

RUN,
LITTLE
MEN...

...THE TOXIC
EMPIRE OF MAN
IS FINISHED.

IT IS TIME
FOR BOTANIC
BEAUTY TO RESUME
DOMINANCE OF
THE EARTH...

... AND THE
WORLD WILL
KNOW IT WAS
POISON IVY WHO
PLANTED THE
SEEDS FOR A
NEW EDEN...

... AND
NOTHING CAN
STOP--

TEAR
GAS, THE
FOOLS!

IT ISN'T
TEAR GAS,
IVY.

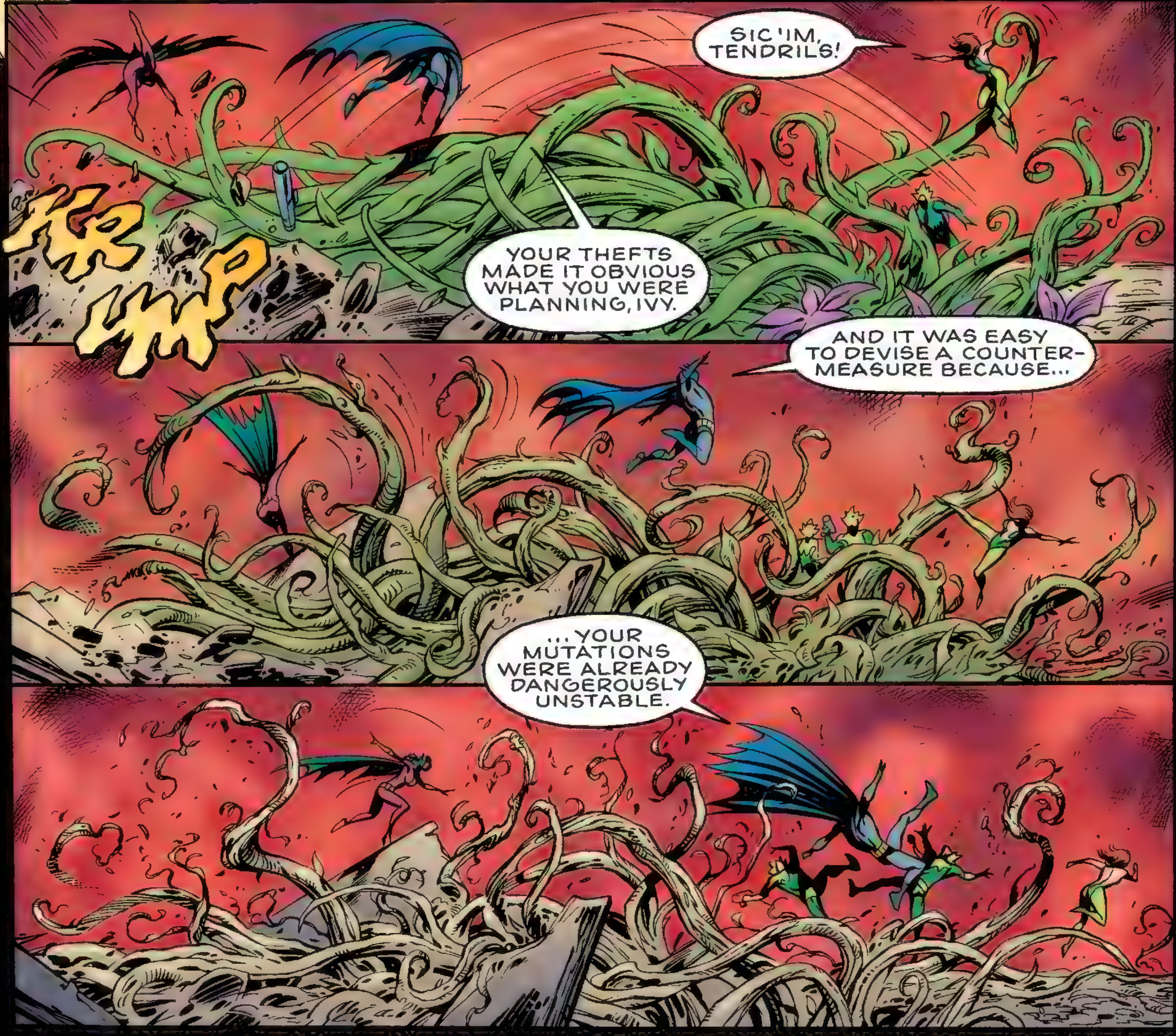


YES. MY CREATIONS ARE AN EVOLUTIONARY MIRACLE...

... BUT BEST OF ALL, THEY OBEY MY WILL.

I INVESTIGATED EVERY PLANT-RELATED THEFT SINCE YOU ESCAPED FROM ARKHAM.

GENE SPLICING TECHNOLOGY. NEW GM STRAINS. SUPER GROWTH MEDIUMS...



SIC 'IM, TENDRILS!

YOUR THEFTS MADE IT OBVIOUS WHAT YOU WERE PLANNING, IVY.

AND IT WAS EASY TO DEVISE A COUNTER-MEASURE BECAUSE...

... YOUR MUTATIONS WERE ALREADY DANGEROUSLY UNSTABLE.



IT'S OVER, IVY.

GIVE UP, PLEASE.



I DON'T WANT TO HURT...



...YOUUUH!



A BANANA PEEL. HOW DID THAT GET UP HERE?

AND THAT INSANE LAUGH.



WHAT LAUGH? YOU MEAN IVY-- WE ALREADY KNOW SHE'S CRAZY...

...AND IF WE DON'T MOVE SHE'LL GET AWAY.

BUT IT WASN'T IVY--

THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

KKLLIK
KLOOO
KLIIISK.

YES, THE
BITTER SCENT
OF SOMETHING
THAT DOES NOT
BELONG RISES
FROM THE
ABYSS.

I THANK
YOU FOR LEADING
ME HERE BUT I
WILL PROCEED
ALONE.

KLEEEEEE
SKISK.

I INSIST.
YOU ARE LOYAL
AND BRAVE BUT
THIS IS MY
DUTY--

GAH!

NOOO!

OBEY,
ALL LIFE IN
THE SEA MUST
BOW TO MY
WILL.

RELEASE
ME, MURDEROUS
BEAST.

YOU'RE
WRONG, HALF
MAN...

...YOUR
TELEPATHY
IS AS PUNY AS
YOUR PRIMITIVE
BRAIN...

...OR YOU
WOULD SENSE
YOUR CAPTOR
IS LIKE NOTHING
BORN OF YOUR
WORLD.



ONCE IT WAS A LOWLY MOLLUSK...

...UNTIL I CHOSE IT TO SERVE MY NEEDS AND RESHAPED IT WITH A SINGLE TOUCH...



...FOR I AM SLIG.

...AND MINE IS THE POWER TO EVOLVE A BEING THROUGH A MILLION GENERATIONS.



THAT IS WHY I WAS ENTRUSTED BY MY MASTER, DARKSEID, TO PROTECT HIS SECRETS UNTIL HIS RETURN.

AND I KILL ALL WHO TRESPASS HERE--



EVEN MY OWN BROTHERS OF THE *DEEP SIX*, WHEN THEIR FAITH FAILED...AND FOOD BECAME SCARCE.

IT IS A LONG TIME SINCE I HAVE FEASTED ON FRESH HUMAN FLESH.





AND YOU WILL NEVER
TASTE IT
AGAIN, VILE
BRUTE.

WONDER
WOMAN?!



BE CAREFUL, DIANA. SLIG'S TOUCH IS DEADLY.

MY MYSTIC LASSO WILL HOLD HIM.

YOU THINK ME BEATEN, WOMAN. YOU ARE WRONG! SLIG CAN MUTATE A POWERFUL ARMY FROM THE MOST INSIGNIFICANT CREATURES.



THERE ARE NO CREATURES HERE, ONLY DEAD BONES.

NO... THEN...

THEN...



...THEN I WILL MUTATE MYSELF.



HA HA HAARRRAA-ARRGGG!

HERA!



GAAH!!

DIANA!?



I'M FINE, AQUAMAN... BUT SLIG...?

HE WAS INSANE! HIS POWER...?

DID IT TRANSFORM OR DESTROY HIM?

EITHER WAY HE'S FINISHED.

HIS SLAVE IS REVERTING TO ITS ORIGINAL FORM.

DON'T DROP YOUR GUARD YET. OTHER MENACES MAY LURK WITHIN.

IT WAS A CRYPTIC CLUE FROM THE PHANTOM STRANGER THAT LED ME HERE--TO AN ENTRANCE OF THIS CAVERN, SECRETED BENEATH A HOUSE ON THE SURFACE--

I DO NOT TRUST THAT SHADOW-MAN... BUT I'M GRATEFUL YOU ARRIVED WHEN YOU DID.

I WAS GLAD TO HELP... ALTHOUGH I HAVE A FEELING YOU WOULD HAVE FARED FINE WITHOUT ME.



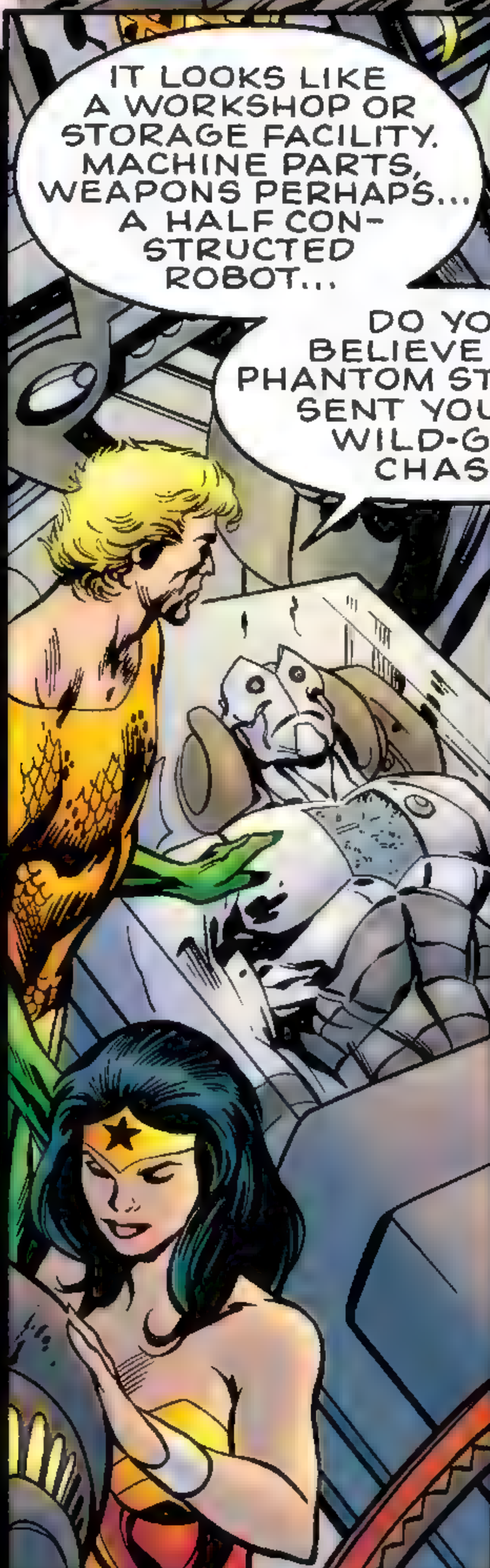
IT LOOKS LIKE A WORKSHOP OR STORAGE FACILITY. MACHINE PARTS, WEAPONS PERHAPS... A HALF CONSTRUCTED ROBOT...

DO YOU BELIEVE THE PHANTOM STRANGER SENT YOU ON A WILD-GOOSE CHASE?

THE PHANTOM STRANGER SAID THIS BASE PRESENTED DARKSEID'S GREATEST THREAT TO EARTH...

... BUT IT CLEARLY ISN'T PART OF ANY ACTIVE SCHEME.

SLIG WAS JUST A FORGOTTEN HENCHMAN DRIVEN MAD BY FEAR AND ISOLATION.



...IT'S A TRAP!

NO! THE MACHINERY IS ACTIVATING...

THE JLA HQ.

THE SENSORS DETECTED ANOTHER ENERGY PULSE, J'ONN. IT WAS RIGHT OFF THE SCALE.

AYE, HALO. BUT, ONCE AGAIN, TOO SHORT LIVED TO IDENTIFY ITS SOURCE.

I SHOULD INVESTIGATE IN PERSON. MY POWERS MIGHT ALLOW ME TO PERCEIVE SOMETHING THE SENSORS CAN'T.

NO, FIRESTORM. I WANT YOU ALL HERE READY TO MOVE IF SUPERMAN IS ATTACKED AGAIN.

WHAT'RE YOU HOLDIN' BACK, MANHUNTER? I VOLUNTEERED FOR THIS GIG T'GET ACTION. SUPERMAN DON'T NEED PROTECTIN'. HE'S THE STRONGEST DUDE ON EARTH.

ASTRAL MAGE IS RIGHT. HE EASILY DEFEATED DESPERO AND EVIL STAR.

DID HE? HIS POWERS FAILED WHEN THE FIGHT WAS OVER.

I THOUGHT THE BIG GUY WAS SICK -- Y'KNOW, FATIGUED OR SOMETHING?

THAT, I BELIEVE, IS A FACTOR. KAL HAS DRIVEN HIMSELF AT MAXIMUM CAPACITY FOR A YEAR.

BUT IT CANNOT BE A COINCIDENCE THAT I EXPERIENCED A SUDDEN ENERGY DRAIN AT THE SAME MOMENT AS KAL.

PERHAPS, BECAUSE I RARELY USE MY POWERS TO FULL CAPACITY, I HAD RESERVES.

PERHAPS I WAS MERELY ON THE PERIPHERY OF AN ATTACK FOCUSED ON KAL.

OF ONE THING I AM CERTAIN. THERE WAS ANOTHER ASSAILANT. ONE WHO STAYED HIDDEN BUT SOMEHOW NEUTRALIZED KAL'S POWERS.

SO UNLESS THERE IS A CRISIS ONLY WE CAN COMBAT, WE WATCH AND WAIT.

KANSAS. THE KENT FARM.

YOU'RE OUT LATE, JON.

JUST KEEPING OUTTA THE LITTLE WOMAN'S WAY.

POOR KAL, CAME OUT HERE FOR A REST. BUT MARTHA... SHE'S BEEN WORKING ON HIS *DISGUISE* FOR HOURS.

THANK GOODNESS YOU'VE ARRIVED, LOIS. I DON'T THINK ANYONE WILL BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE KAL, BUT I THINK HE LOOKS A BIT...

CREEPY!

IT'S TOO OBVIOUSLY A DISGUISE, MARTHA.

AS AN UNDER-COVER REPORTER, I'VE WORN A FEW MYSELF. WOULD YOU MIND IF I...?

NO, PLEASE... YOU GO RIGHT AHEAD, DEAR.

LOOSE CLOTHES WILL HIDE KAL'S PHYSIQUE.

NOTHING EYE-CATCHING.

A SLIGHT STOOP WOULD HELP.

ET VOILÀ, THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE FOR ANY DISGUISE IS...

... LESS IS MORE!

DO YOU *REALLY* THINK THIS WILL FOOL ANYONE, LOIS?

MOUNT
EVEREST.
TIBET.

... KAL'S TURN-
AROUND ON HIS
TRIP TO THE AWARD
CEREMONY WAS
JUST ONE PIECE
OF THE PUZZLE,
ATOM.

I REALLY HOPE
WE AREN'T DOING THIS
JUST BECAUSE YOU THINK
SUPERMAN MIGHT BE
FASTER THAN YOU,
FLASH.

HE ISN'T!
IN THE AIR, OF
COURSE... I CAN'T
FLY... BUT ON MY
TREADMILL I'VE
REACHED SPEEDS
THAT CAN BREACH
TEMPORAL AND
DIMENSI--

YEAH. YEAH.
AND YOU AREN'T
THREATENED.

... LOOK, THIS IS
SERIOUS. I FIRST NOTICED
IT WHEN I CONDUCTED AN
ATOMIC DECAY EXPERIMENT
IN MY LABORATORY. IT
FLUCTUATED TWICE.

YOUR
EQUIPMENT
MUST BE
FAULTY.

NO. I CHECKED
IT OUT... AND EVERY
OTHER RATIONAL
EXPLANATION.

SO WE'RE
LEFT WITH THE
IRRATIONAL.

THAT'S WHY I
NEED YOU. I'M JUST
A LOWLY FORENSIC
SCIENTIST, YOU'RE
THE PRIZE-WINNING
PHYSICIST.

THIS CLOCK
IS ACCURATE
TO A MILLIONTH
OF A SECOND, AND
SYNCHRONIZED AND
LINKED WITH ITS
TWIN IN MY
LAB.

YOU WANT TO
MEASURE TIME
FLUCTUATIONS?

I ALREADY
HAVE. RIGHT
ACROSS THE GLOBE
AND YOU WON'T
BELIEVE WHAT
I FOUND.

SYNCHRONIZATION SET
ALTITUDE: 0023.062
07:46:02819
ALTITUDE: 8847.076
07:46:02819

NOTHING. NOT WITH THAT CHRONOMETER. LOOK, "WHAT WE CALL TIME" ISN'T A CONSTANT.

PROXIMITY TO A GRAVITATIONAL MASS CAUSES AN INVERSE REDUCTION IN WHAT YOU'D CALL THE TEMPORAL FLOW. BUT IT'S INFINITESIMAL.

IGNORING THE FACT WE'RE ON TOP OF A HIGH G MASS, TO MEASURE A VARIATION AT THIS ALTITUDE WOULD REQUIRE A PERIOD AND ACCURACY OF... HECK, BARRY...

...WHY'D WE COME UP HERE TO DISCUSS PHYSICS?

WE COULD DO THAT IN YOUR NICE WARM LABORATORY.

STOP WHINING. YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY FEEL THE COLD. YOU'RE INSIDE THE PROTECTIVE AURA MY POWER GENERATES.

SEZ YOU. I'M FREEZING!

JUST LOOK AND LEARN, PROFESSOR.

NO! THAT... ISN'T POSSIBLE! OVER POINT THREE OF A SECOND DISCREPANCY IN SIX MINUTES.

TIME CAN'T JUST FLUCTUATE LIKE THAT. YOUR CLOCKS MUST BE--

TOTALLY ACCURATE! I'VE CHECKED THEM DOZENS OF TIMES. THIS IS REAL. AND IT'S INTENSIFYING.

IF YOU'RE RIGHT... IT CAN'T BE A NATURAL PHENOMENON. THIS IS BIG... AND BAD!

EXACTLY WHAT I THOUGHT. Y'KNOW, I'M STARTING TO FEEL COLD NOW.

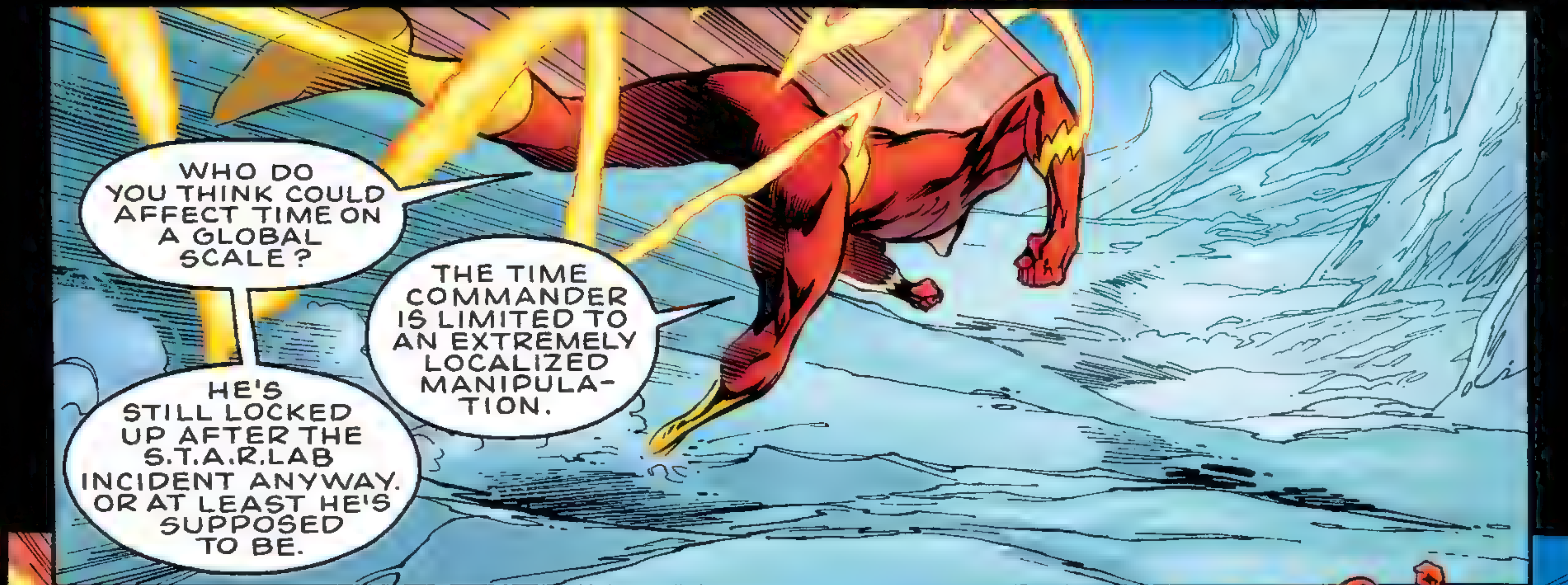
HANG ON TIGHT, RAY. THE DOWNHILL JOURNEY WILL BE EVEN FASTER.

VARIANCE RUNNING...
ALTITUDE: 0023.062

07:52:23556

ALTITUDE: 8847.076

07:52:23875



WHO DO YOU THINK COULD AFFECT TIME ON A GLOBAL SCALE?

THE TIME COMMANDER IS LIMITED TO AN EXTREMELY LOCALIZED MANIPULATION.

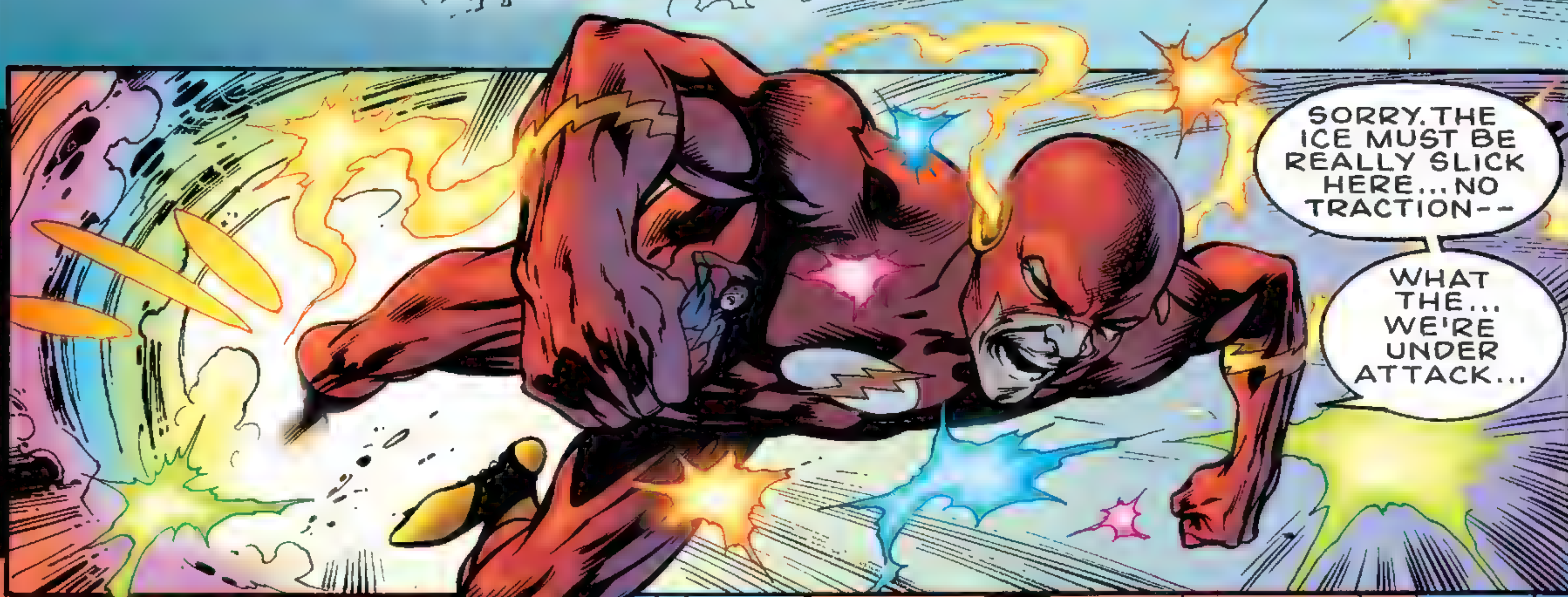
HE'S STILL LOCKED UP AFTER THE S.T.A.R. LAB INCIDENT ANYWAY. OR AT LEAST HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE.



IT'S GOT TO BE SOME COSMICALLY POWERFUL BEING.

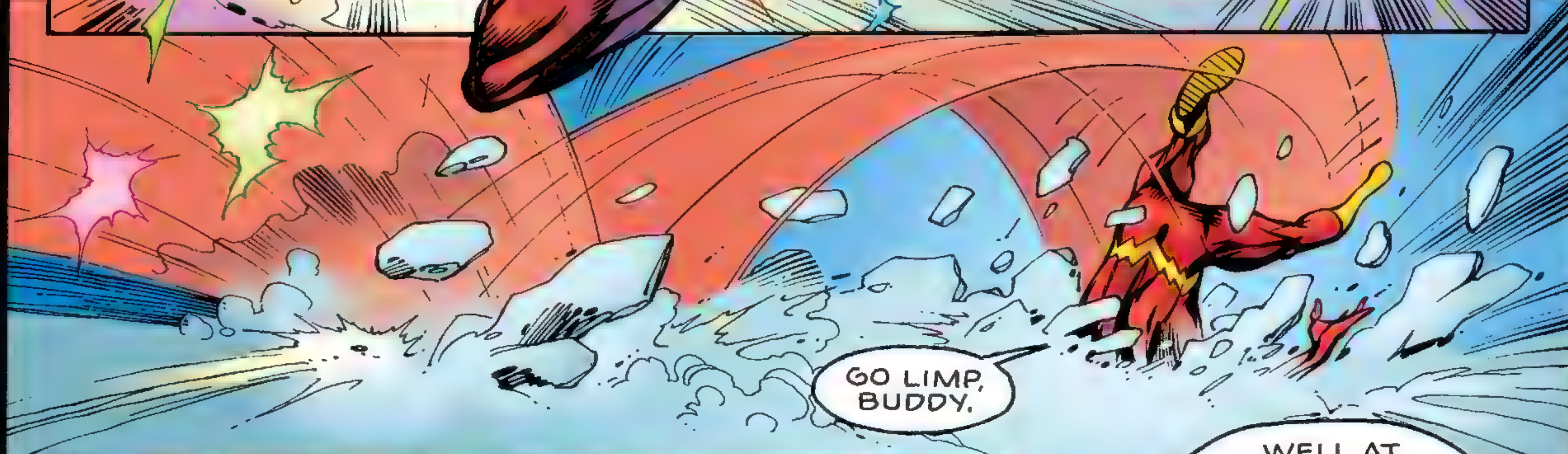
LIKE THE NEW GODS?

EASY, BARRY. NO NEED TO SHOW OFF. SLOW DOWN.

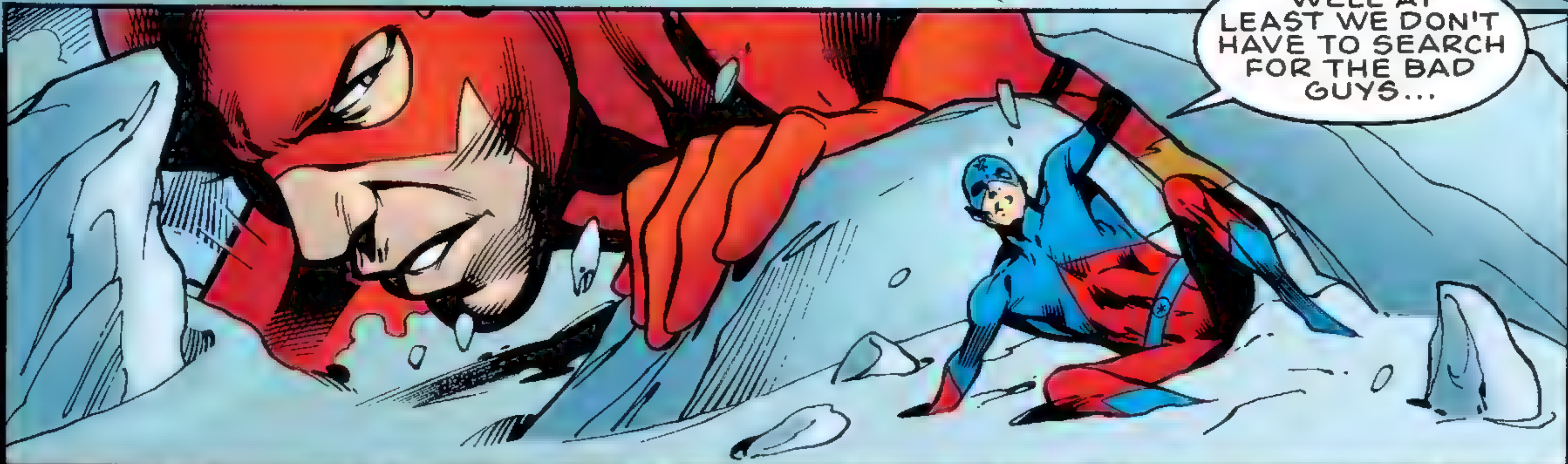


SORRY, THE ICE MUST BE REALLY SLICK HERE... NO TRACTION--

WHAT THE... WE'RE UNDER ATTACK...



GO LIMP, BUDDY.



WELL AT LEAST WE DON'T HAVE TO SEARCH FOR THE BAD GUYS...



...THEY'VE
FOUND US.

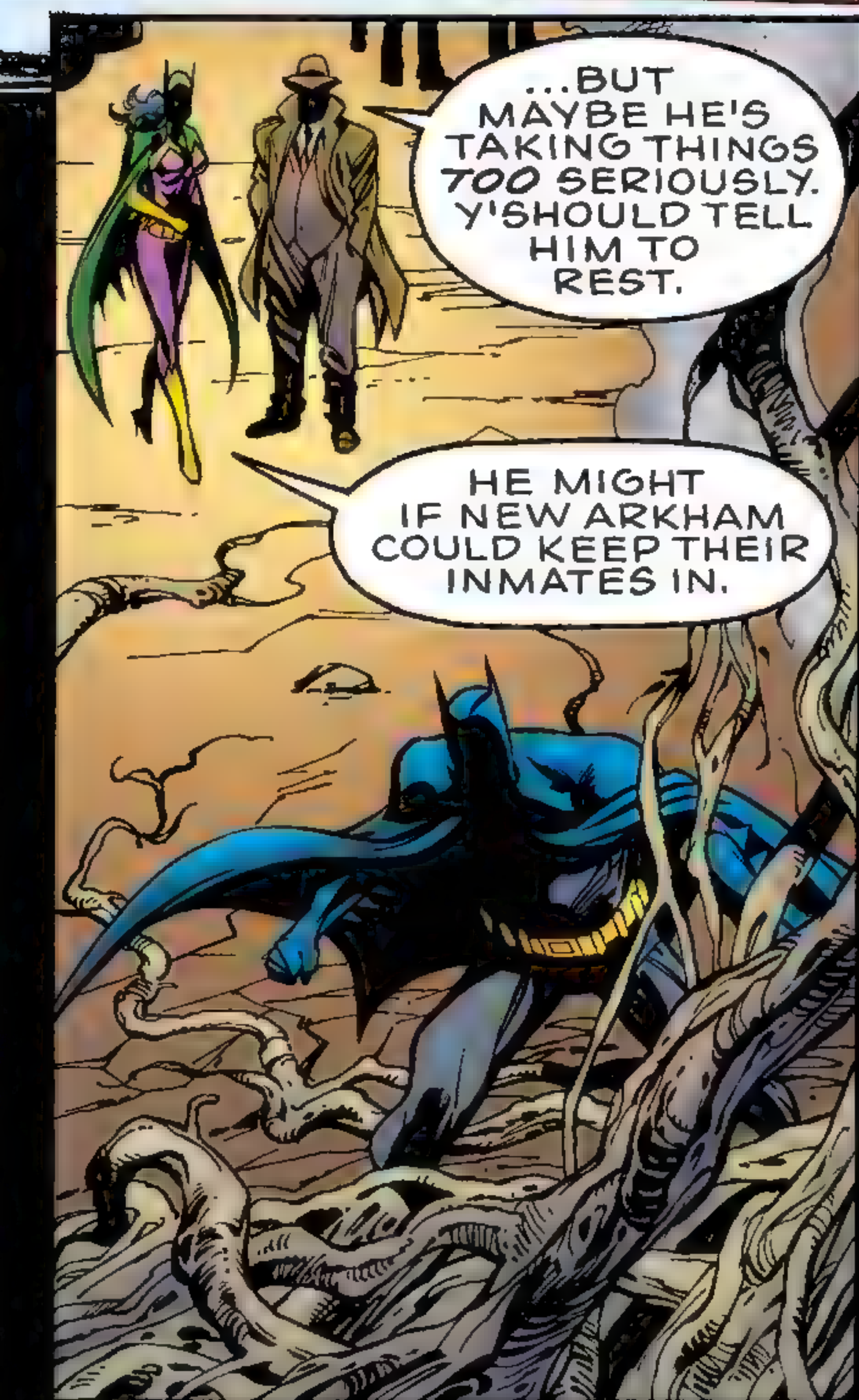


GOTHAM.

...A BLADE OF GRASS CAN SPLIT CONCRETE. MY SEEDS ARE SOWN. I WILL RETURN.

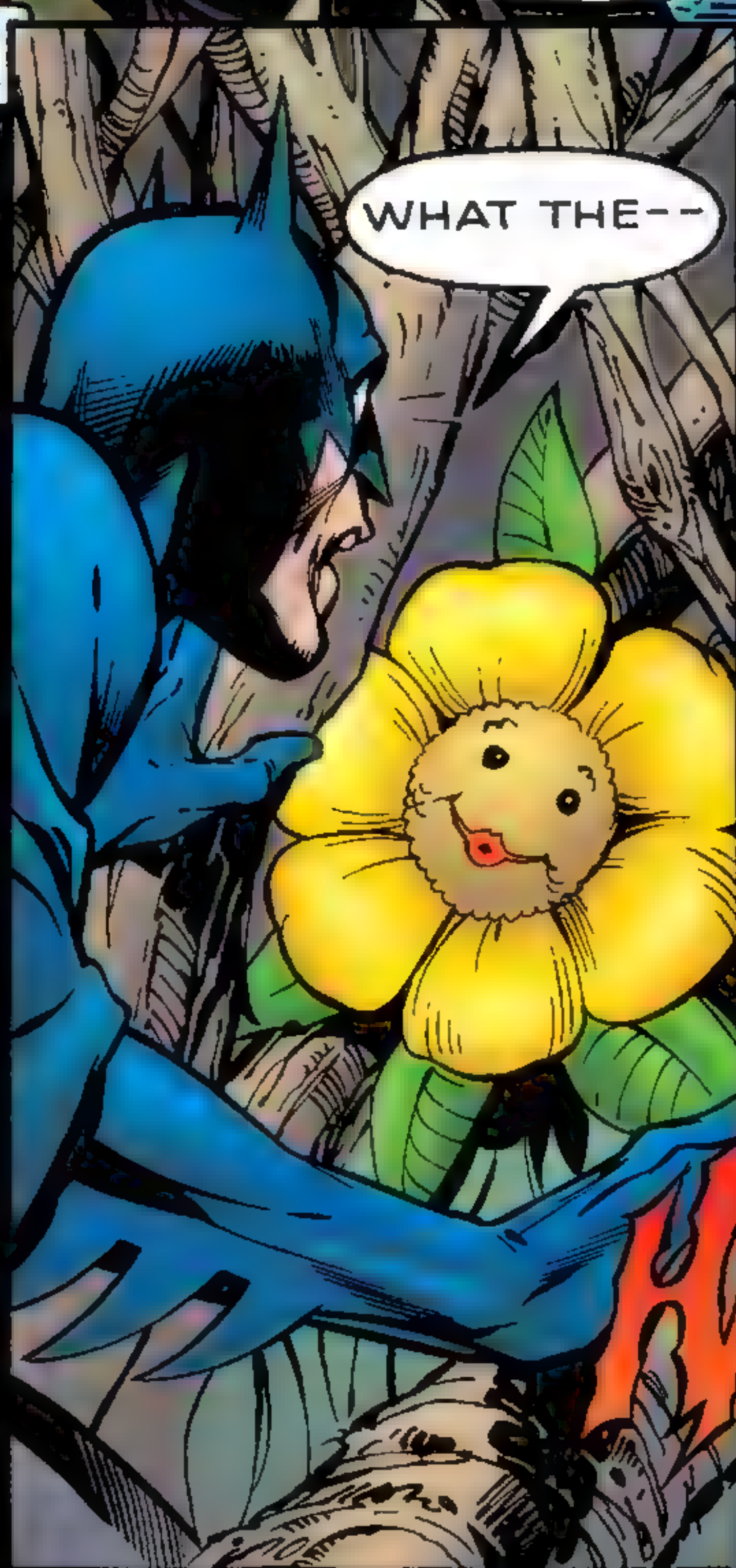
MAD OR BAD, SHE'S DANGEROUS, COMMISSIONER.

YEAH, WE'RE REAL LUCKY BATMAN FIGURED OUT WHAT SHE WAS PLANNING...



...BUT MAYBE HE'S TAKING THINGS TOO SERIOUSLY. Y' SHOULD TELL HIM TO REST.

HE MIGHT IF NEW ARKHAM COULD KEEP THEIR INMATES IN.



WHAT THE--



PHAAAH!!

HA HA HA HA HA



BRU-- BATMAN... ARE YOU OKAY?

THE LAUGH! YOU MUST HAVE HEARD IT THAT TIME?

NO... WHAT SORT OF LAUGH?



LIKE...THE JOKER.

IT CAME FROM OVER THERE...

MIDWAY CITY.

SPATIAL
DISRUPTION
SOURCE, VECTOR
ZERO-ZERO
SEVEN
FIVE.

THAT'S THE
TOWNHOUSE OF
DR. NILES CAULDER--
HQ TO THE *DOOM*
PATROL.

LOOKS
LIKE THERE'S
BEEN TROUBLE.
WHAT CAN
YOU DETECT,
RING?

STATIC
DISRUPT-
TION.

EXTEND
AN UMBILICAL
PROBE.

PROBE
DESTABILIZ-
ING...

UMBILICAL
COMPROM-
IZED.

EXZZZTERNAL
DRAAAIN...

BREAK
THE LINK,
RING...

BREAK
THE--

THEY'RE
BACK.

NO...IT'S
THE GREEN
LANTERN.

WHAT'S
HAPPENING
TO HIM?

HE LOOKS
TRAPPED...IN
SOME SORT
OF ENERGY
VORTEX.

HE MUST HAVE BEEN ON STAR SAPPHIRE'S TRAIL. THAT'S WHERE SHE TELEPORTED IN WITH THE OTHER TWO.

WHATEVER HE'S FIGHTING, IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S LOSING.

I'LL YANK HIM FREE. YOU CAN DO THE ANALYSIS LATER.

CAREFUL, CLIFF. LANTERN'S TOUGH. THIS MUST BE SERIOUS.

STAY BACK, GUYS. THERE'S A STRONG ELECTRICAL CHARGE IN THE AIR.

FORTUNATELY THE CHIEF INSTALLED NEW INSULATION. I'M DAMN NEAR INVUL...

INVU...

INV...

IT'S DRAINING CLIFF'S GENERATOR.

MUST BE SOME SORT OF ENERGY SPONGE.

I CAN MOVE FAST ENOUGH TO GET HIM FREE.

NO, BEAST BOY. WEIRD ENERGY IS MY FORTE.

LANTERN'S OWN POWER IS FEEDING THE TRAP. IT'S A SIMPLE CIRCUIT.

I'LL RELEASE NEGATIVE MAN. HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO BREAK THE CONNECTION...

... BUT STAY WELL DOWN. WHEN MY DARK HALF MAKES CONTACT WITH POSITIVE ENERGY IT CAN BE...

"... EXTREMELY VOLATILE!"

LARRY...

...LARRY,
ARE YOU
OKAY?

YEAH... ONLY
JUST... WHATEVER
IT WAS TOOK A
CHUNK OUT OF
ME.

CLIFF
AND GREEN
LANTERN
ARE A-OK
TOO.

THANKS, GUYS. THAT WAS
CLOSE. I COULDN'T BREAK
FREE. IT WAS SOME SORT
OF SPATIAL RIFT.

THREE
WOMEN TELE-
PORTED IN THERE.
ONE WAS YOUR
PAL, STAR
SAPPHIRE.

SHE'S
NOT MY
PAL.

YEAH,
WHATEVER. SHE
KIDNAPPED THE
CHIEF -- NILES
CAULDER.

SHE MUST BE
WORKING FOR SOMEONE
PRETTY POWERFUL. THAT
TRAP WAS FAR BEYOND
STAR SAPPHIRE'S
ABILITIES.

INSIDE THE RIFT... I
WAS HELD BY A FORCE
CAPABLE OF DRAINING
LANTERN ENERGY DI-
RECTLY FROM MY RING--
AGAINST MY WILL.

THIS COULD
BE THE LEAD
I WAS LOOKING
FOR.

CAN
YOU TRACK
HER?

THE
SAPPHIRE
GEM ENERGY
HAS A UNIQUE
SIGNATURE.

IF THAT'S
A "YES" LEAD
ON. UNTIL THE
CHIEF'S SAFE
WE'RE A
TEAM.

WE
DIDN'T SEE
WHICH WAY
THEY LEFT.
THEY...

WHUPPED
YOU? YEAH.
SAPPHIRE'S
TOUGH.

NOT
AS TOUGH
AS THE ONE
WITH THE
BIG...ER,
BICEPS.

THEY
CAUGHT
US OFF
GUARD.

WHERE
DID SAPPHIRE'S
GROUP TELEPORT
OUT?

THEY DIDN'T. I
HEARD SAPPHIRE TELL
THE OTHERS THAT NILES
HAS A HEART CONDITION
AND WOULDN'T SURVIVE
TELEPORTATION
STRESS.





SMALLVILLE.

DID YOU ENJOY THE FILM?

THE APE DIDN'T LOOK REAL.

IT WAS CGI.

ANGEL AND THE APE

I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND--

THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I HAVE SEEN A MOVIE.

RELAX. NO ONE'S TAKING ANY NOTICE OF YOU... KARL.

I'M FAMISHED. LET'S GET SOME SUPPER. JON SAID THE ONLY DINER IN TOWN IS AT THE END OF THE STREET.



THE RESTAURANT CLOSES EARLY TONIGHT, LOIS.

I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T KNOW SMALLVILLE?

THAT IS TRUE--I RARELY CAME INTO TOWN. ONLY TO HELP MY FATHER WITH A HEAVY LOAD--



I HEARD THE COOK TELL THE WAITRESS TO LOCK UP EARLY BECAUSE HE HAS A POKER GAME.

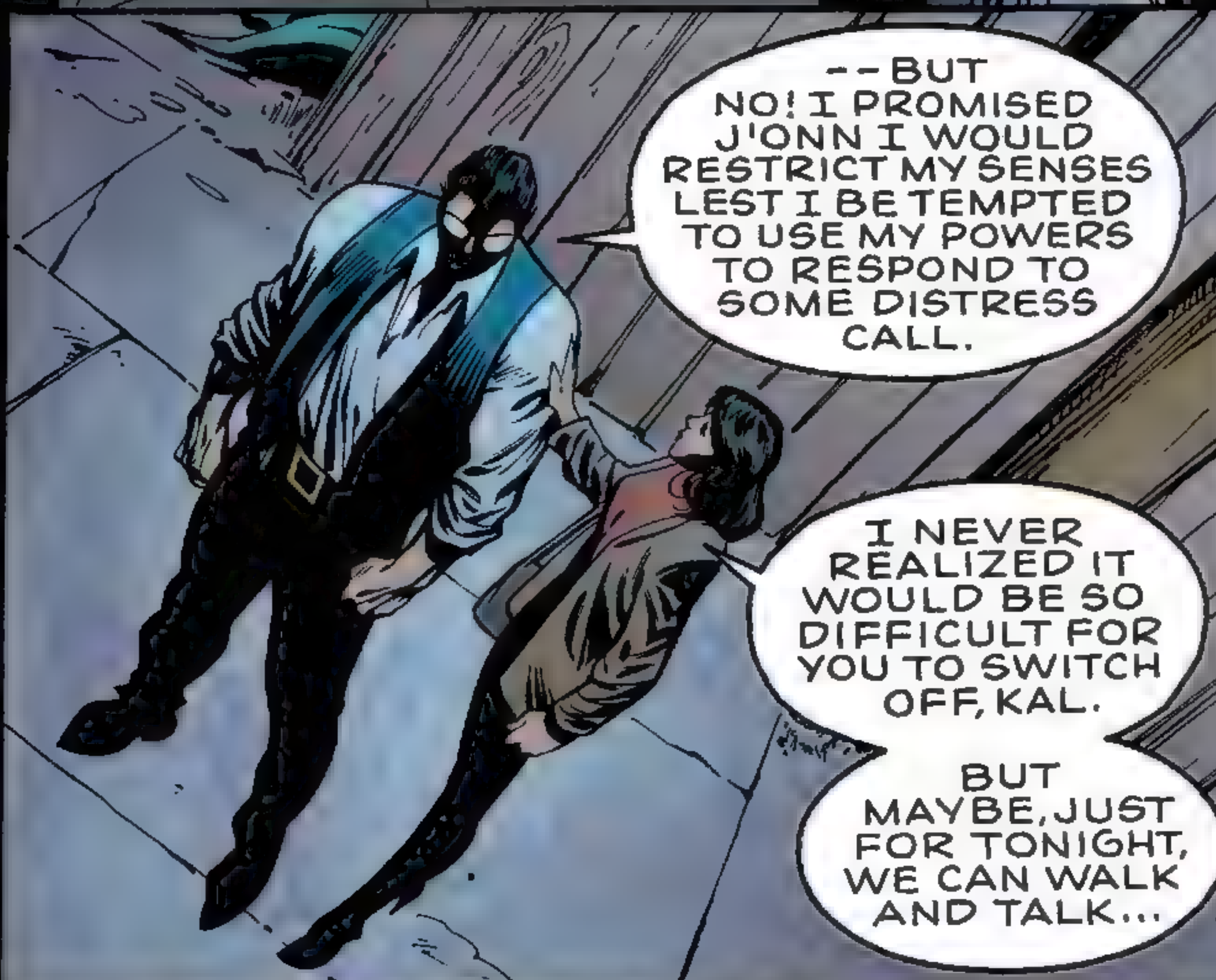
YOU HEARD? JUST HOW SENSITIVE ARE YOUR SENSES?



HMM. I CAN SEE...

...I CAN SEE THE ASTRONAUTS' FOOTPRINTS ON THE MOON.

I CAN HEAR--



-- BUT NO! I PROMISED J'ONN I WOULD RESTRICT MY SENSES LEST I BE TEMPTED TO USE MY POWERS TO RESPOND TO SOME DISTRESS CALL.

I NEVER REALIZED IT WOULD BE SO DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO SWITCH OFF, KAL.

BUT MAYBE, JUST FOR TONIGHT, WE CAN WALK AND TALK...



... AND PRETEND ALL IS WELL IN THE UNIVERSE.

NEW GENESIS.

...DARKSEID
KEPT SECRET
WHAT HE FOUND
ON EARTH BUT
WE KNEW HE
FEARED THE
"ONE."

SILENCE,
WITCH. DARE
NOT TO BETRAY
DARKSEID'S
HEIR!

YOU DEVIANT MORON. I MANIPULATED
YOU AS EASILY AS I DID THE OTHERS.
THE ONLY REASON I ENDURED YOUR
REVOLTING PRESENCE WAS FOR THE
REGIMENTS OF PARADEMONS
STILL LOYAL TO YOUR
FATHER'S MEMORY.

THEY ARE
EQUALLY DES-
PICABLE...

...EACH HOPING
TO USE THE OTHER
TO GAIN CONTROL OF
DARKSEID'S SHATTERED
EMPIRE BY FINDING THIS
MYSTERIOUS "ONE,"
MAKING HIM AN ALLY
OR A SLAVE.

GRACE KNOWS
MORE THAN SHE
IS TELLING. SHE
STILL HARBORS
AMBITIONS FOR
POWER.

THEY FORGED THEIR PATHETIC
ALLIANCE AFTER THE FALL OF
APOKOLIPS AND HAVE HAD A
YEAR TO SEARCH FOR THIS
MYSTERIOUS "ONE." BUT
THEY FOUND NOTHING.

IF THERE
WAS EVER
ANYTHING TO
FIND?

YOU ARE
FORGETTING THE
POWER DRAIN OF
THE OAN BATTERY,
ORION.

IF YOU SUSPECT KALIBAK
AND GRACE OF ATTACKING
THE GUARDIANS, WHY DID
YOU NOT TAKE THEM
TO OA?

I CAME
AT IZAYA'S
REQUEST.

WE WERE
REMISS TO FORGET
THAT THE UNIVERSE
IS WOVEN FROM A
SINGLE THREAD.

SEE NOW,
OUR LINK TO
THE **SOURCE**
WITHERS.

THE
POWER OF
NEW GENESIS
IS ALSO BEING
DRAINED.



GOTHAM.

...KEEPING JUST AHEAD...

...TAUNTING ME...

...BUT I'LL FIND HIM...

BATMAN, STOP!

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

NO...IT'S...

...ARKHAM ASYLUM!

BRUCE?

I WAS LED HERE BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE IT HAPPENED...

...ROBIN. BATGIRL...

...I FAILED THEM!

YOU MUST HAVE...IT WAS DEAFENING!


IT'S OVER, BRUCE. YOU KI-- THE JOKER'S DEAD!

BUT THAT INSANE LAUGH, STILL MOCKING ME...

I CAN'T HEAR IT.

NO. I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T.

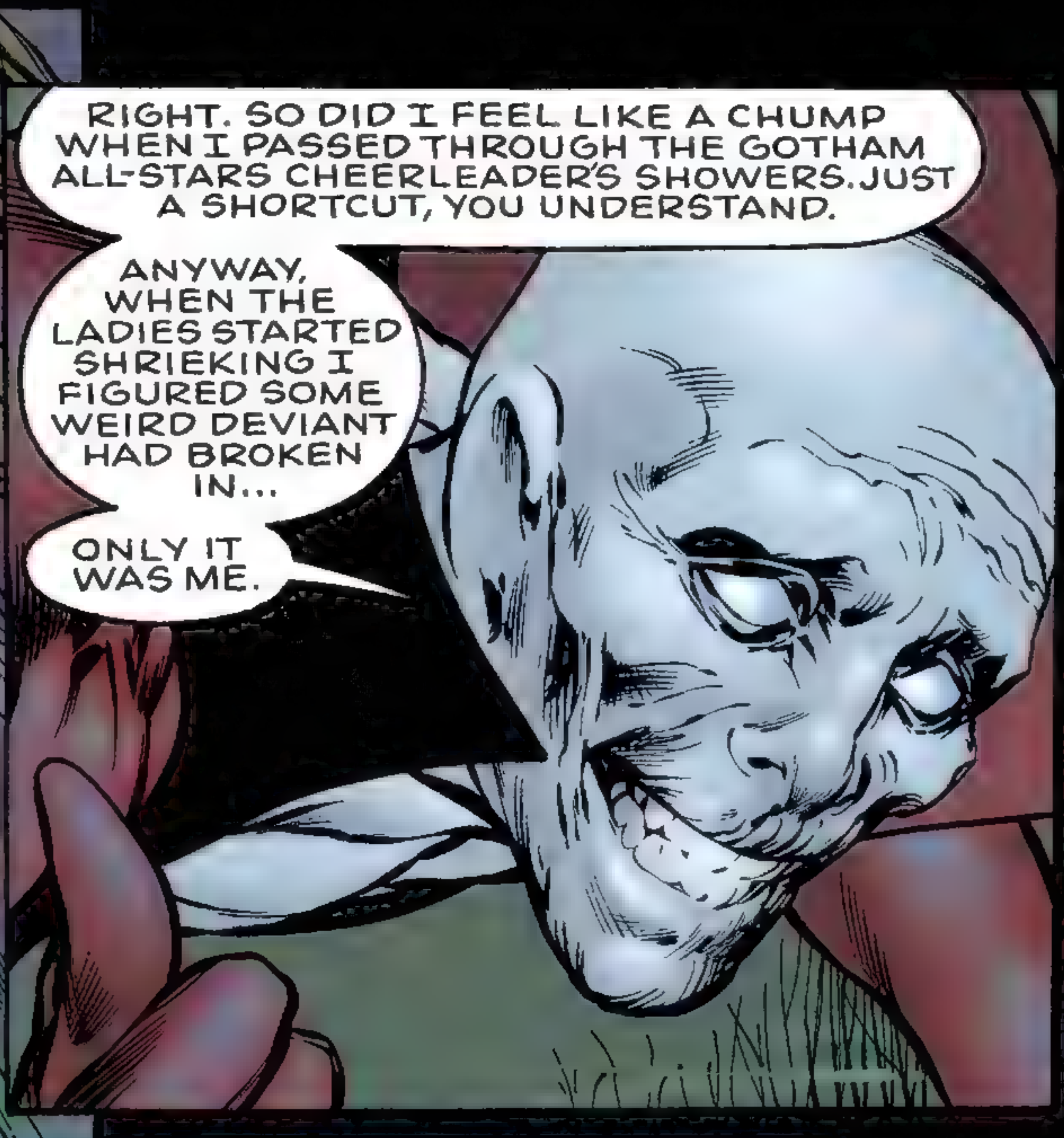
I DID.



BUT IT WASN'T
ANY NORMAL SOUND--
WHICH IS WHY YOUR
LOVELY LADY COULDN'T
HEAR IT.

DEADMAN?
YOU'RE SOLID.

VISIBLE!
I'M STILL THE
SAME OLD
DISEMBODIED
SPIRIT.



INCIDENTALLY, IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU, "MS." BATS. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A FAN OF...

RIGHT. SO DID I FEEL LIKE A CHUMP WHEN I PASSED THROUGH THE GOTHAM ALL-STARS CHEERLEADER'S SHOWERS. JUST A SHORTCUT, YOU UNDERSTAND.

ANYWAY, WHEN THE LADIES STARTED SHRIEKING I FIGURED SOME WEIRD DEVIANT HAD BROKEN IN...

ONLY IT WAS ME.

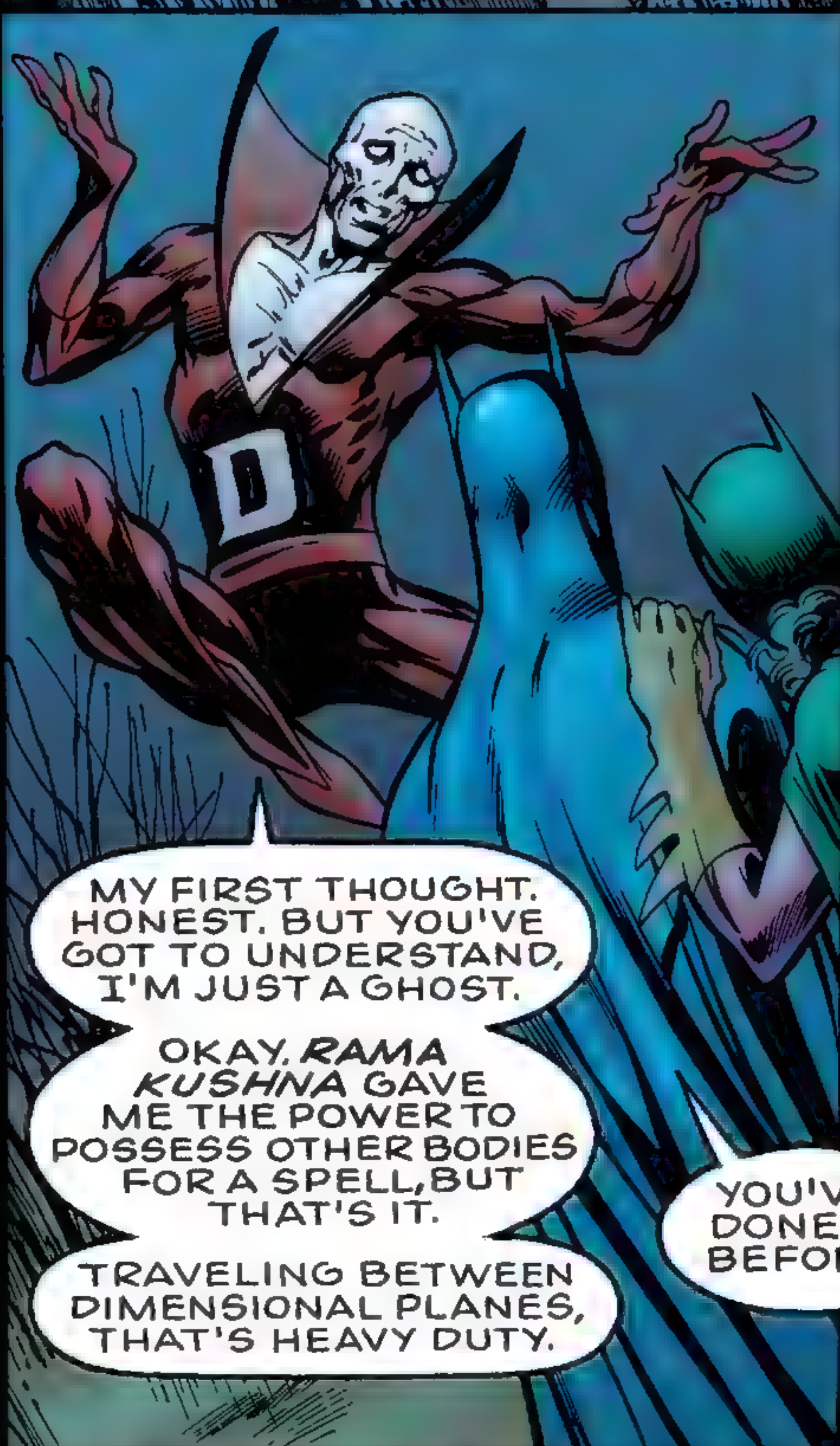
...Y'KNOW, YOUR SENSE OF STYLE. MIND IF I CALL YOU SELINA?

DEADMAN! WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU'RE USUALLY ONLY VISIBLE IN NANDA PARBAT.

THEN I STARTED SEEING STUFF. THINGS THAT DON'T BELONG HERE... Y'KNOW, "FROM BEYOND." NOTHING MAJOR. JUST THE PESKY GREMLIN TYPES...

...BUT LOTS OF THEM, AND I DON'T MIND TELLING YOU THOSE UGLY CRITTERS FREAK ME OUT.

WHY HAVEN'T YOU CONTACTED THE SPECTRE? IT SOUNDS LIKE HIS AREA OF EXPERTISE.



MY FIRST THOUGHT. HONEST. BUT YOU'VE GOT TO UNDERSTAND, I'M JUST A GHOST.

OKAY, RAMA KUSHNA GAVE ME THE POWER TO POSSESS OTHER BODIES FOR A SPELL, BUT THAT'S IT.

TRAVELING BETWEEN DIMENSIONAL PLANES, THAT'S HEAVY DUTY.

YOU'VE DONE IT BEFORE.

YEAH. LOTS OF TIMES. WHEN THE HIGHER PLANES WERE CALM, LIKE SMOOTH LAKES, BUT RIGHT NOW THEY'RE DAYTONA BEACH IN THE HURRICANE SEASON.

YOU'RE SCARED?

YOU BET, BATS! RIGHT OUTTA MY ECTOPLASMIC SKIN.

MIDWAY CITY.

MY MYSTICAL SENSES DETECT NOTHING. YOUR HELMET LENSES ARE OFF ON THIS ONE, HAWKWOMAN.

NO, *THIS* PATTERN IS FAMILIAR.

IT'S AN OLD ADVERSARY.

A PETTY CRIMINAL...

...WITH THE ABILITY TO PHASE THROUGH SOLID MATTER.

THE GAME'S UP, **SHADOW THIEF.**

I HAVE THE DEVICE KATAR DESIGNED TO NEUTRALIZE YOUR XARAPONIAN TECHNOLOGY.

THOUGH I LOVE BEING PURSUED BY SUCH A DELIGHTFUL LADY, I HAVE A PRESSING ENGAGEMENT ON XARAPON.

I'M WARNING YOU, SANDS. STOP!

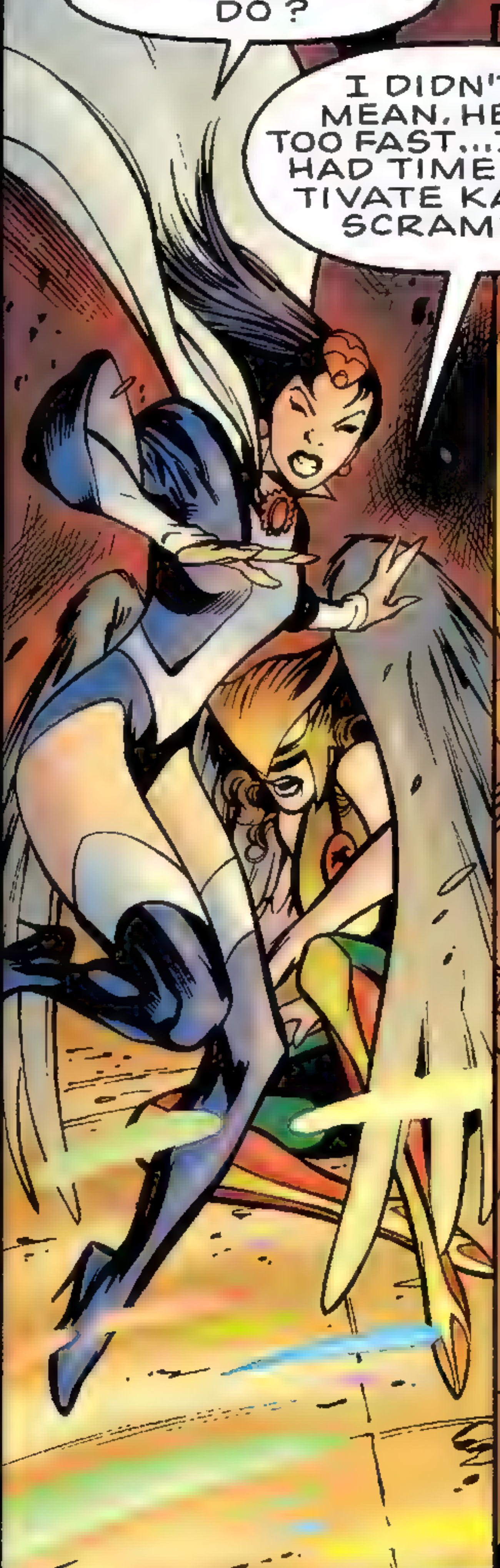
YOUR INFERIOR THANAGARIAN SCIENCE POSES NO THREAT TO ME, DEAR GIRL...

...SO DO YOUR WORST!



HAWKWOMAN,
WHAT DID YOU
DO?

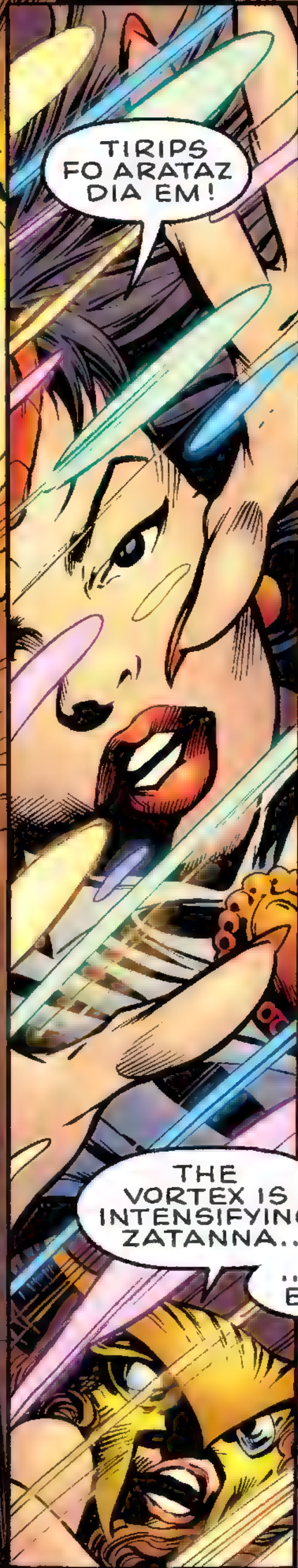
I DIDN'T! I
MEAN, HE WAS
TOO FAST... I NEVER
HAD TIME TO AC-
TIVATE KATAR'S
SCRAMBLER.



WELL,
YOUR QUARRY
IS NO MORE, BUT
THE DIMENSIONAL
PORTAL HE CREATED
IS STILL OPEN.

TFIR OT
DNOYEB
LAES!

IT'S
GROWING...
FEEDING...
ON YOUR SPELL. I
CAN SEE THE
ENERGY MATRIX
BUILDING LIKE
A TORNADO.

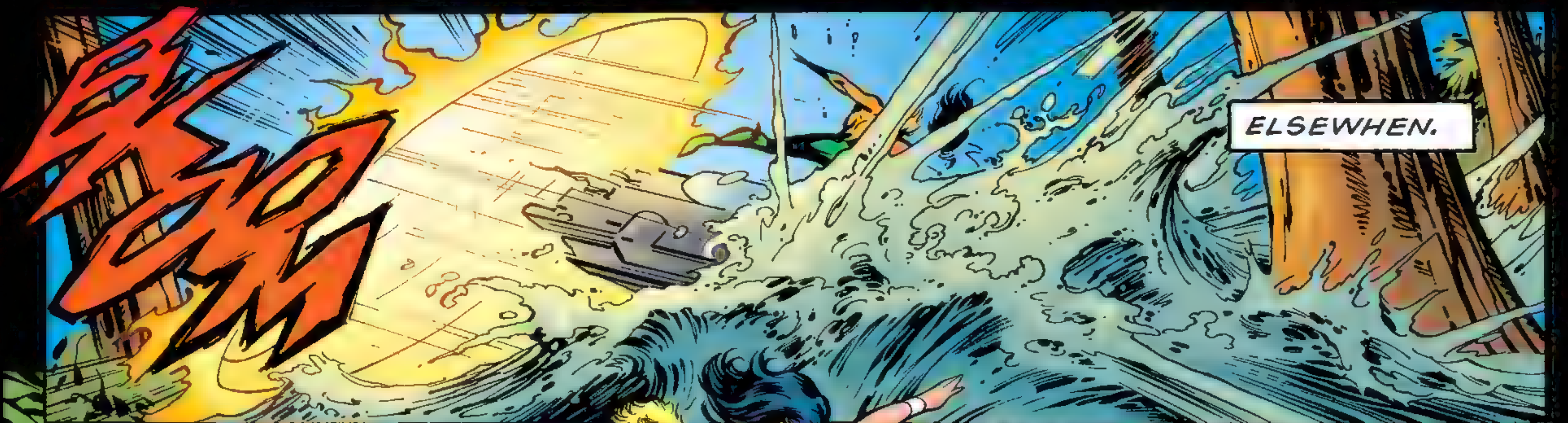


TIRIPS
FO ARATAZ
DIA EM!

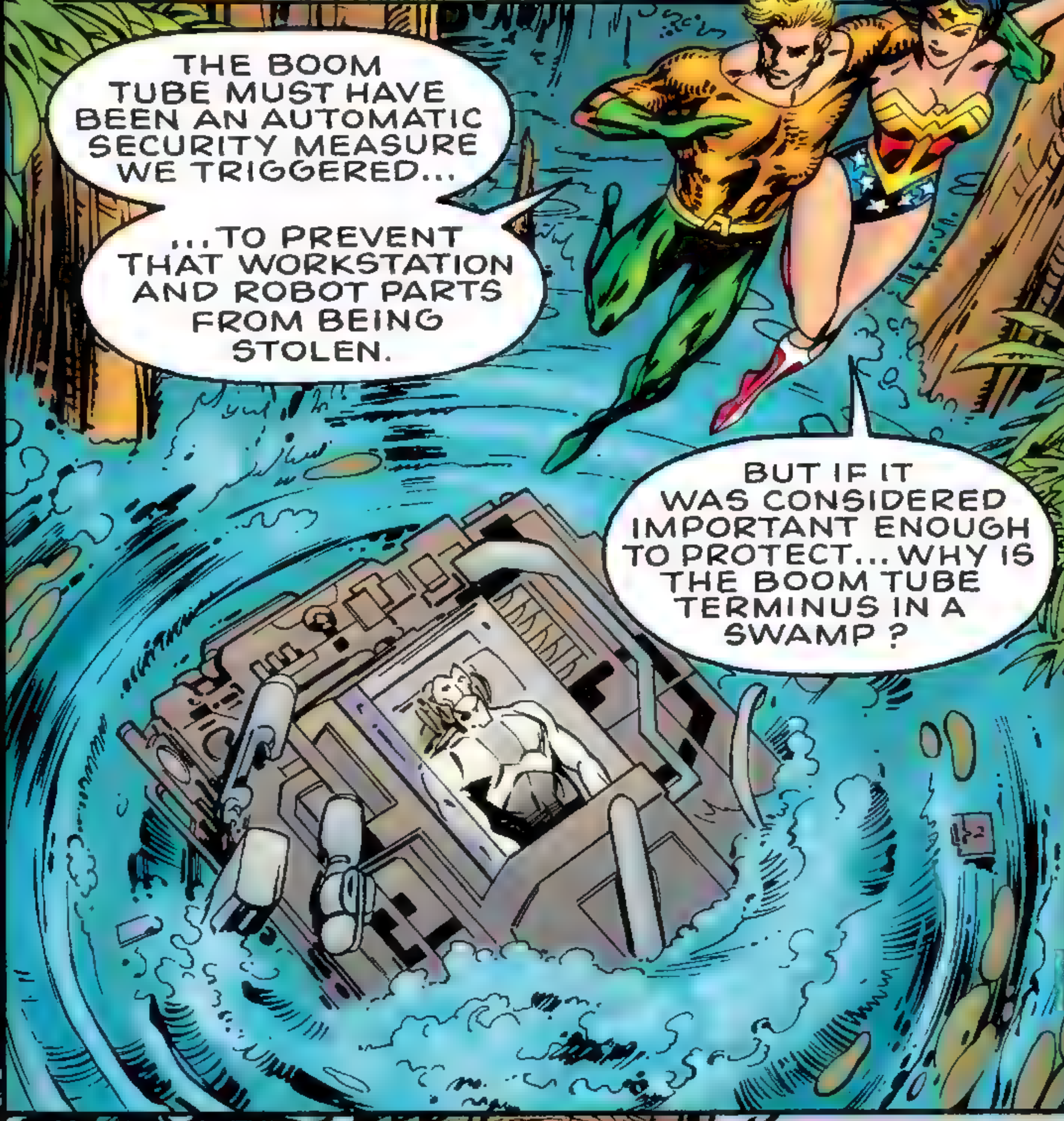
THE
VORTEX IS
INTENSIFYING,
ZATANNA...

... GET BACK
BEFORE --





ELSEWHEN.



THE BOOM
TUBE MUST HAVE
BEEN AN AUTOMATIC
SECURITY MEASURE
WE TRIGGERED...

...TO PREVENT
THAT WORKSTATION
AND ROBOT PARTS
FROM BEING
STOLEN.

BUT IF IT
WAS CONSIDERED
IMPORTANT ENOUGH
TO PROTECT... WHY IS
THE BOOM TUBE
TERMINUS IN A
SWAMP?



PERHAPS IT
WAS DEFECTIVE AND
THIS IS NOT WHERE
WE WERE MEANT
TO LAND.

NOT *WHERE*,
AQUAMAN...



...WHEN!



ELSEWHERE.

... FIVE AGAINST TWO, AND ONE OF THEM A RUNT. WE SHOULD'VE BEAT THEM EASILY.

NOT MY FAULT, OWLMAN. JOHNNY QUICK CLAIMS TO BE THE FASTEST MAN ALIVE BUT THE FLASH HAMMERED HIM.

ONLY 'CAUSE YOU GOT IN MY WAY, ULTRAMAN.

AND POWER RING BROKE MY NAIL.

SORRY, BABE.

WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY ATTACKING US? I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THE TWISTED LOGIC OF YOU DOPPELGANGERS AND YOUR MIRROR-IMAGE EARTH.

TYPICAL OF THOSE FROM YOUR REALITY, FLASH. TO BELIEVE YOUR SIMPERING WEAKNESS MAKES YOU RIGHT.

YOU SURE YI'WANT TO WASTE TIME DEBATING PHILOSOPHY, SUPER-WOMAN? THE REST OF THE JLA WILL HAVE DETECTED YOUR ARRIVAL ON OUR EARTH.

OUR EARTH, FLASH! YOU ARE THE INTERLOPERS THIS TIME. YOU CROSSED INTO OUR REALITY.

SO WHY NOT COME CLEAN AND TELL US WHY YOU'RE ATTACKING OUR WORLD WITH TEMPORAL DISRUPTIONS?

THE KENT FARM.

SO YOU HAD NO IDEA HOW POWERFUL YOU WERE UNTIL YOU FOUGHT JIMMY?

NO, I KNEW I WAS A FOUNDLING, THAT I WAS DIFFERENT FROM THE COMMUNE, BUT OUR WAYS...THE AMISH WAYS DEMANDED STRICT DISCIPLINE AND RESTRAINT.

THEN HOW DID IT FEEL TO LET LOOSE? TO SUDDENLY POSSESS SO MUCH POWER?

I REMEMBER ONLY THE OVERWHELMING RAGE...

...MY PARENTS...

...I... I SHOULD HAVE ACTED SOONER--

YOU CAN'T BLAME YOURSELF FOR THEIR DEATHS. OLSEN WAS A MONSTER.

MADE SO BY MY DNA.

YOU CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WAS YOU-- OLSEN WAS EMOTIONALLY UNSTABLE--CORRUPTED BY POWER...YOU'RE THE OPPOSITE-- IF ANYTHING YOU CARE TOO MUCH.

TOO MUCH?

SURE YOU'RE A HANDY GUY TO HAVE AROUND TO AVERT COSMIC DISASTERS AND TACKLE ALIEN MONSTERS, KAL. Y'KNOW, THE BIG STUFF.

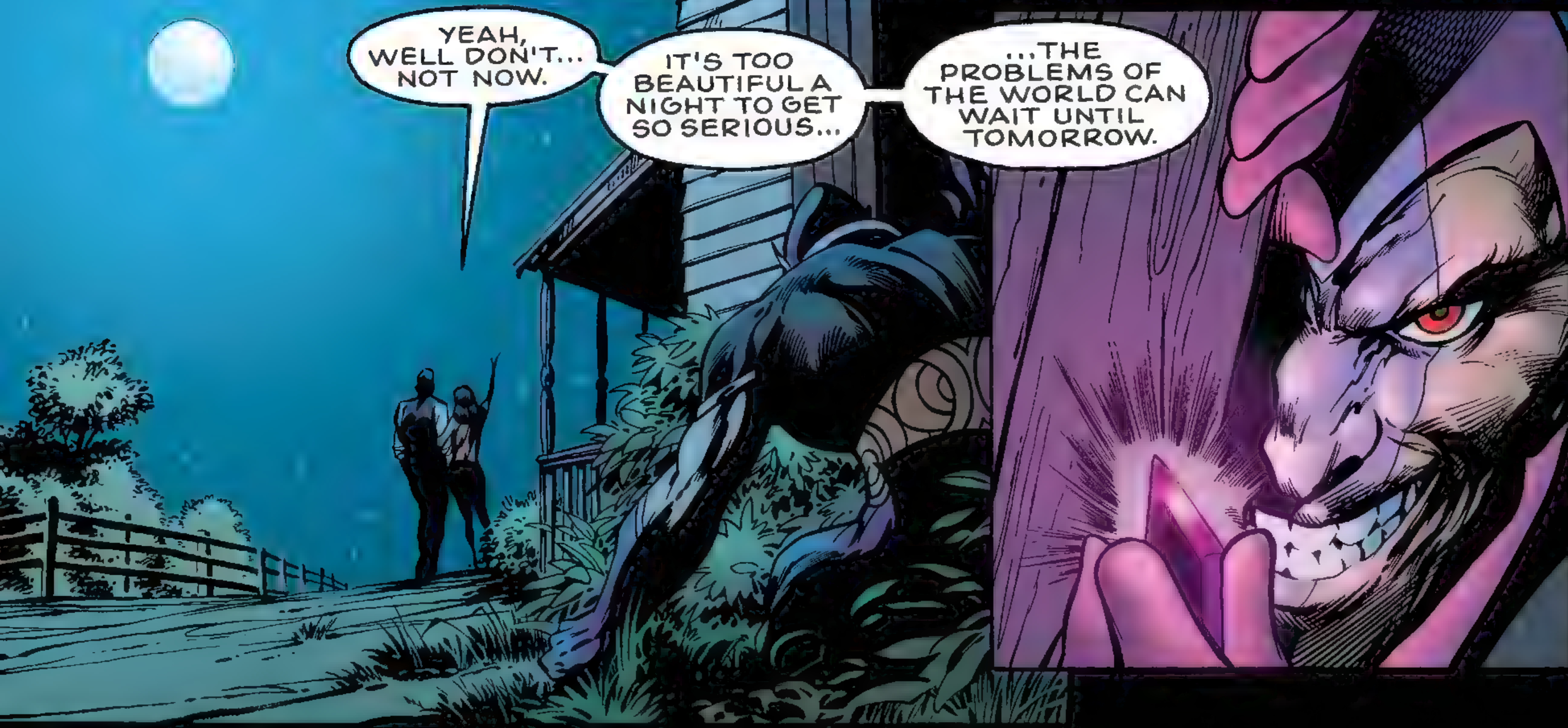
BUT HUMANS HAVE ALWAYS GROWN THROUGH ADVERSITY... WE MAY NEVER HAVE YOUR PROWESS BUT WE WILL GROW.

I HAD NEVER CONSIDERED THAT.

YEAH, WELL DON'T... NOT NOW.

IT'S TOO BEAUTIFUL A NIGHT TO GET SO SERIOUS...

...THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD CAN WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW.



SOMEWHERE
IN BETWEEN.

"YOU'RE
THE ONLY MAN
FOR THE JOB,
DEADMAN."

"YOU CAN DO
IT, DEADMAN."

WHY
DO I ALWAYS
LET BATMAN
INTIMIDATE
ME...?

UNFF!

KOWF

THIS AIN'T
GOOD.

'Tis brutal
chaos plain
to see...

...and surely
not the place
for thee.

ETRIGAN.
AM I GLAD TO
SEE YOU.

I cannot save
thee from this
demon strife.

Fight, pesky
spook, for thine
own afterlife.

I CAN'T DO
THIS. SOMETHING
THIS BIG IS THE
SPECTRE'S RESPON-
SIBILITY. WHERE
IS HE?

Open thine
eyes and look
around...



...the one
thou seek'st is our
battle ground.

"THIS IS
ABSOLUTELY
NUTS."

...THE ENTIRE
SENSOR ARRAY
SPIKED AT EXACTLY
THE SAME INSTANT,
J'ONN.

THE
SYSTEM WILL
AUTOMATICALLY
COMPENSATE,
HALO.

NO...
EVERYTHING'S
CRASHING...

WE'RE
GOING TO
BE TOTALLY
BLIND.

OR YOU COULD
TRY THE LOW-TECH
OPTION AND JUST
LOOK OUT THE
WINDOW.

MY GUESS
IS THE THING
THAT LOOKS LIKE
A BAD SPECIAL
EFFECT IS THE
PROBLEM.

I KNOW
I SAID I WAS
LOOKIN' FOR ACTION
BUT SURELY THAT'S IN
THE "THIS IS A JOB
FOR SUPERMAN"
CATEGORY.

WE ARE
THE JLA ON
DUTY, ASTRAL
MAGE.

SO
BEFORE I
CALL UPON
KAL...

...WE WILL
INVESTIGATE.

ARKHAM ASYLUM.

WE DON'T
NEED TO SEE WHAT'S
DOWN HERE, BRUCE...
YOU SENT DEADMAN
TO GET THE SPECTRE
AND--

-- AND
THESE RUINS
ARE TOTALLY
UNSTABLE...

YOU GO.
I...I NEED TO
BE SURE.

OF WHAT?
BRUCE.

WHY
I WAS LED
HERE.

BRU--

SELINA!?

TWAS
THE WHIM OF
ABNEGAZAR,
GHAFT AND
RATH THAT
BROUGHT THEE
HENCE...

LET HER GO,
DEMONS...

...IT'S ME
YOU WANT.

AYE, AND THEE
WE HAVE. NOW, OUR
GATHERING THOU
SHALL ENTERTAIN
AND AMUSE.

MY CUE
METHINKS.



SURPRISE!

JOKER?

NO!...

NO...
YOU'RE...

BACK! BACK
TO SKIN A CAT...
WOMAN.

RAARRGGGH!!

WAK

AHHH,
BROTHERS.
FEEL THE
EMOTION...
RAW AND
STRONG.

A
TORTURED
SOUL OF
STRENGTH
AND TRUE
NOBILITY.

'T WILL BE
A JOY TO SAVOR
ITS DESTRUC-
TION.

SCARED
YET, BATMAN?
YOU SHOULD
BE...

THAK

... BECAUSE IF
YOU THOUGHT
I WAS BAD
BEFORE...

... NOW
I'M HELL.

SIXTY-FIVE
MILLION
YEARS AGO.

I HOPED
THEIR PRIMITIVE
BRAINS WOULD
BE SIMILAR
TO FISH...

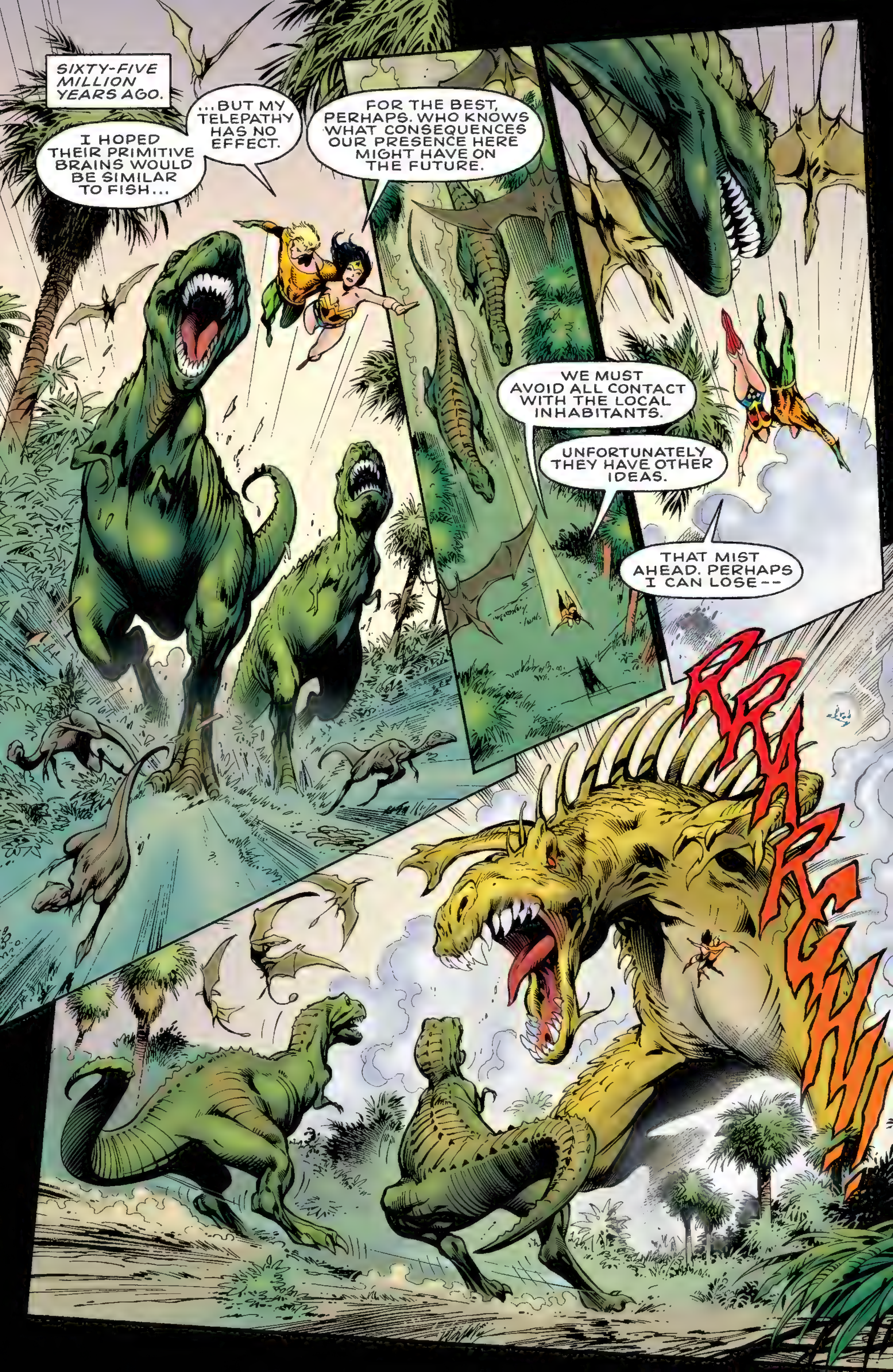
... BUT MY
TELEPATHY
HAS NO
EFFECT.

FOR THE BEST,
PERHAPS. WHO KNOWS
WHAT CONSEQUENCES
OUR PRESENCE HERE
MIGHT HAVE ON
THE FUTURE.

WE MUST
AVOID ALL CONTACT
WITH THE LOCAL
INHABITANTS.

UNFORTUNATELY
THEY HAVE OTHER
IDEAS.

THAT MIST
AHEAD. PERHAPS
I CAN LOSE --





IT'S
FADING...

PLEASE
FORGIVE ANY
SHOCK OUR ILLUSORY
DETERRENT CAUSED,
WONDER WOMAN,
AQUAMAN...

... AND
COME ABOARD
OUR TIME
BUBBLE.

I'M ULTRA. MY
WIFE THE PRINCESS
PROJECTRA IS RESPONS-
IBLE FOR THE ILLUSION--
AS YOU MIGHT GUESS
FROM HER TITLE.

SECOND
WIFE! SHE'S
NOT OUR
MOM.

WOW!
WW'S EVEN
HOTTER IN
THE FLESH.

EXCUSE THE
CHILDREN. THEY HAVE
NEVER MET LIVING
LEGENDS BEFORE... WE
ARE MEMBERS OF THE
LEGION OF SUPER-
HEROES, FROM THE
30TH CENTURY.

THOUGH I HAVE
NEVER MET ANY OF
YOUR LEGION BEFORE, I
HAVE HEARD REPORTS OF
YOUR FUTURE EXPLOITS
FROM THE FLASH.

YES...
THE SCARLET
SPEEDSTER... I
MET HIM IN MY
YOUTH.

IT IS MOST
FORTUNATE
THAT YOU SHOULD
HAVE FOUND
US HERE.

I'M AFRAID
NOT. WE ARE
RESPONSIBLE
FOR YOUR SITU-
ATION.

WE WERE
TRAVELING BACK
INTO THE PAST... YOUR
PRESENT, WHEN OUR
TEMPORAL WARP IMP-
ACTED WITH YOUR
BOOM TUBE.

WE'VE NEVER
EXPERIENCED SUCH
A PHENOMENON...
IT WAS PROBABLY
AN EFFECT OF THE
DISRUPTION IN
YOUR ERA.

WHAT
DISRUP-
TION?

HIGH ABOVE
MIDWAY CITY.

HALO,
ASTRAL MAGE,
CAN YOU DETECT
ANYTHING?

I'M BARELY
MANAGING TO
KEEP THE WIND
FROM DRAGGING
ME INSIDE.

FIRESTORM?

I CAN
SEE SOME
PRETTY WEIRD
QUANTUM
STUFF.

IT
LOOKS REAL
UNSTABLE...

A
BLACKHAWK
FIGHTER...?

...FROM
WORLD WAR
TWO?



THE KENT FARM.

I'M A CITY-BRED GIRL, MARTHA...

...IS IT NORMAL FOR YOU GUYS TO GET UP THIS EARLY TO CHECK THE WEATHER?

IT LOOKS LIKE A MAJOR STORM, LOIS.

MAYBE EVEN A TWISTER.

THAT IS NO NATURAL PHENOMENON, JONATHAN.

KAL? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

I TRIED TO CONTACT THE JLA BUT GOT NO ANSWER. I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO INVESTIGATE.

THINK AGAIN, ALIEN.

... AND THESE HOSTAGES WILL ENSURE YOU COMPLY WITH MY WILL.

I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO LEAVE...

ECLIPSO!

DON'T HARM THEM, PLEASE. WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?

I HAVE SIGNALLED MY EMPLOYER TO SEND A BOOM TUBE. WHEN IT MATERIALIZES, YOU WILL ENTER.

WHY?

ALL I KNOW OR CARE IS THAT AMAZING GRACE WILL FURTHER ENHANCE MY POWERS WHEN YOU ARE DELIVERED.

SO SHE'S THE ONE WHO SENT DESPERO AND EVIL STAR?

SHE MUST BE HARD UP FOR HELP IF SHE NEEDS TO RELY ON YOU, ECLIPSO.

THEY WERE FOOLS. I OBSERVE AND STUDY MY OPPONENTS... TO FIND A WEAKNESS. THE KRYPTONIAN IS POWERFUL... BUT YOU THREE... YOU ARE HIS ACHILLES HEEL.

OKAY, WE'RE CONVINCED, ALREADY... YOU'RE A COWARDLY, SNEAKY CREEP.

SILENCE, OLD MAN, OR I'LL SKIN YOU ALIVE.

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH. SPARE US THE BAD GUY SPEECH AND HURRY UP WITH THE BOOM TUBE.

OR MAYBE IT ISN'T COMING. MAYBE YOUR MISTRESS HAS MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO.

LOIS. HUSH.

ENOUGH.

WHY? HE'S A FOURTH-RATE VILLAIN. WITHOUT HIS LITTLE MAGIC GEM...

... HE'S JUST A BIG, UGLY... COWARDLY THUG.

IT'S OKAY, KAL.

NO! DON'T HURT HER, PLEASE.



I WAS AN
UNDERCOVER
REPORTER!

BE CARE-
FUL, LOIS. HE'S
DANGEROUS.

SO ARE WE
WHEN WE'RE
PROVOKED,
KAL!

THUD



KAWG

NO ONE THREATENS MY WIFE AND GUESTS.

HE'S UNCONSCIOUS.

BUT NO THREAT WITHOUT HIS EVIL LITTLE GEM... YOU TAKE IT, KAL.

GOOD. HE'S A NASTY, NASTY MAN...

JUST IN CASE I'LL HOGTIE HIM LIKE THE CRITTER HE IS.

LIKE I TOLD YOU, KAL. SOMETIMES HUMANITY REALLY NEEDS YOUR HELP BUT SOMETIMES WE CAN GET BY JUST FINE ON OUR OWN.

YOU ARE A REMARKABLE WOMAN, LOIS.

YOU NOTICED, HUH! SO WHY DON'T YOU GO AND SAVE THE WORLD...

... THEN COME BACK TO ME.

FAR BENEATH
MIDWAY CITY.

SOUNDS LIKE
THERE MIGHT BE
A MAJOR STORM
OVERHEAD.

GREAT. IF
THIS SEWER
FLOODS, WE'LL
ALL DROWN.

DEATH FROM
A FATAL INFECTION
IS FAR MORE LIKELY
JUDGING BY THE
STENCH.

C'MON, WHAT
ARE WE WAITING
FOR, LANTERN? YOU
SAID YOU COULD
TRACK STAR
SAPPHIRE.

SOMETHING
WEIRD IS GOING
ON...HER ENERGY
TRAIL, IT'S...EH...
IT'S EVAPOR-
ATING.

Y'THINK
IT'S ANOTHER
TRAP?

I DON'T
KNOW...IT'S
POSSIBLE.

...SO I'D
NEVER LAY
A TRAP FOR
YOU...

...ESPECIALLY
AS ME AND
THE GIRLS ARE
WORKING ON
THE SIDE OF
THE ANGELS
THIS TIME.

OH, LANTERN,
YOU CAUTIOUS
LITTLE BOY-
SCOUT.

YOU
SHOULD KNOW
I PREFER THE
"HANDS ON"
APPROACH...

SAVE
THE HOOEY,
LADY.

YOU
KIDNAPPED
THE CHIEF
AND WE'RE
TAKIN' HIM
BACK...

NO,
ROBOTMAN...



... PICK
ON SOMEONE
YOUR OWN
STRENGTH.

YOU'RE A
GLUTTON FOR
PUNISHMENT,
RIVET-
HEAD.

HEY,
BLONDIE...

THAT'S
NOT YOU,
STRETCH.

RITA!

SAVE YOUR
CORNBALL INSULTS,
SAPPHIRE. YOU'RE
THE ONE WHO'S
FINISHED.

OKAY,
SUPER-
COP...

AMATEURS...

... YOU
SHOULD BE
CALLED THE
DOOMED
PATROL--

... YOU'VE
GOT ME...



...BUT
FIRST CALL
YOUR FRIENDS
OFF.

DON'T
WORRY, HERO.
I TOLD THE GIRLS
NOT TO INFLICT
ANY **SERIOUS**
HARM.

YOU
TOLD...?

...SO WHAT'RE
YOU GONNA DO
WITH ME?
HMMM?

HOW
DOES JAIL
SOUND?

OH, I LOVE
IT WHEN YOU
TALK TOUGH,
HAL.

I WANT
ANSWERS...

I CAN'T
LET YOU DO
THAT, GREEN
LANTERN.

WU

...THEN
YOU'RE
DECOYS!

IT'S TIME
I FOUND OUT
WHAT YOU'RE
HIDING.

NEW GENESIS.

...DARKSEID
STOLE MY SYNTHETIC
BRAIN HOST AND
HID IT.
MY CREATION FOR
MY BRAIN. IT WOULD
HAVE MADE ME
INVINCIBLE...
HE FEARED ITS
POWER SO HE
STOLE IT...

...USED ITS
DESIGN,
MY DESIGN,
TO BUILD HIS
ARMOR, STOLE IT
AND HID IT, BUT
I CAN BUILD IT
AGAIN...
BUT I MUST
HURRY TIME IS
SHORT...

WHATEVER
GRASP DESAAD
HAD ON REALITY IS
GONE, HIGHFATHER.
QUESTIONING
HIM WOULD BE
FRUITLESS.

ANY CLUE
HE CAN PROVIDE
IS VALUABLE.

WHY DO
YOU BELIEVE
HE KNOWS
SOMETHING,
SCOTT?

DARKSEID'S LAST
WORDS-- "ONLY I
COULD HAVE SAVED THE
UNIVERSE." IT WASN'T
A THREAT... OR A PLEA.
IF ANYONE KNOWS
DARKSEID'S SECRET,
IT IS DESAAD.

...DECEIVED
BY YOUR PRIDE...
SUPERIOR IN
YOUR GOOD-
NESS...

BUT
ALL EVIL DOES
NOT DESTROY
NOR GOOD
PRESERVE.

SPEAK
SENSE, DESAAD...
WHAT DO YOU
KNOW OF THE
"ONE"?

...LEARNED ITS
SECRETS... BUT
NOW IT IS TOO
LATE... NOTHING
CAN STOP IT.

ALL THERE
IS TO KNOW.
DARKSEID FOUND
THE ONE BUT I
STUDIED IT...

SECRETS,
PAH! BLIND
FOOLS. SEARCHING
FOR CLUES TO
FIND EVIL TO
OPPOSE...



SMASH

POW

POW

YOU CAN'T FIGHT.

YOU CAN'T DODGE.

I COULD EASILY KILL YOU...

...BUT WHERE IS THE FUN IN THAT?

THE GIRL, LET ME HAVE HER NOW.

NO, NO, NO, IMPETUOUS FOOL. OUR ABILITY TO GRANT THEE SUBSTANCE IS FINITE... AS ARE THE POWERS YOU WASTE WITH EXUBERANT MALICE.

SO QUICKLY NOW... RESUME OUR ENTERTAINMENT.

BUT THE BATMAN IS BEATEN.



A'EEE!

GAH!

HE HURT ME!?

'TIS THINE OWN FAULT.

THE MANIFESTATION THOU INHABITS IS WEAKENING.

BUT 'T WILL MAKE FOR A FAR MORE INTERESTING CONTEST. BOTH IN PAIN WITH EMOTIONS RAW. WHAT A FEAST.

AND YOU'VE HAD YOUR FILL, DEMONS.

BROTHERS! WE ARE FOUND.

FLEE!

TOO LATE, FIENDS.

IN THE NAME OF NABU, I BANISH YOU TO WHENCE YOU CAME.


FLASH

ONCE AGAIN
FORCES BEYOND
MY SPELL. IT IS TAKING
ALL MY PROWESS TO
MAINTAIN THE
PORTAL.

THOUGH YOU
ARE IMMUNE TO THE
PORTAL'S MYSTICAL
ATTRACTION...

QUICKLY,
OUTSIDERS. HERD
THE DEMONS INTO
ITS SUCKING MAW.
BUT TAKE CARE!



A large, action-packed comic book panel depicting a chaotic battle. In the upper right, Batman is shown in mid-air, cape flowing, looking down at the fray. Below him, a large, pale, demonic figure with a wide, toothy grin and a single eye is the central focus. To the left, a character resembling the Joker is being held back by another figure. In the bottom left, a character with a large sword is engaged in combat. The background is filled with other characters in various states of combat and flight. The color palette is dominated by purples, pinks, and blues, with high-contrast lighting.

... A DEMON MIGHT STILL PULL YOU IN.

BRUCE, WHERE ARE YOU?

...I'M TAKING YOU WITH ME, BATMAN.

...WITH THE KNOWLEDGE YOUR WOMAN...

...WILL BE MY COMPANION FOR ETERNITY.

BRUCE!

BETTER STILL... YOU CAN STAY, BATMAN...

YOU'LL NOT HARM HER, JOKER.

YOU'LL NEVER HARM ANYONE AGAIN.

BRUCE! NOOOO!

NO!

GH

AN ALTERNATE JLA HQ, ON AN ALTERNATE EARTH.

...THE STORM IS CLEARLY UN-NATURAL... AND IT'S INTENSIFYING.

IT HAS TO BE SOME SORT OF ATTACK.

I SAY WE RUN.

YOU WOULD, BUT WHERE TO?

I SAY WE TORTURE THE FLASH AND ATOM. THEY KNOW SOMETHING.

DO YOU STILL CLAIM TO HAVE PHASE-SHIFTED FROM YOUR EARTH TO OURS BY ACCIDENT?

YEAH. IT'S USUALLY QUITE A FEAT TO ALTER MY VIBRATIONAL FREQUENCY BUT I WAS RACING DOWN EVEREST--

AND THE TEMPORAL ANOMALIES?

THAT'S NOT US. IF YOU BOZOS UNDERSTOOD SCIENCE INSTEAD OF JUST STEALING IT YOU'D KNOW ALL THE ALTERNATE EARTHS EXIST IN THE SAME PHYSICAL SPACE--

EACH SEPARATED FROM THE OTHER BY ONLY A MINUTE VARIATION OF QUANTUM FREQUENCY.

RIGHT. IT COULD BE WE HIT A HOT SPOT. A ZONE OF CONVERGENCE--

THAT'S NOT REAL SCIENCE. YOU'RE MAKING IT UP. POWER RING, THEY'RE ALL YOURS.

CAN ANYONE HEAR THAT WEIRD CRA--

THE WINDOW!

THE STORM SHATTERED IT!





THAT WAS A LUCKY BREAK.

TIME FOR ROUND TWO.

NO, ATOM. WE'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO OUR EARTH AND WARN THE JLA.

...I NEVER BELIEVED SUPERMAN WAS-- HOLY COW.

YOU'VE DONE IT, BARRY.

YEAH... BUT THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT, RAY. IT FEELS TOO...

...TOO EASY!

AND THAT LOOKS LIKE THE SAME CRAZY STORM WE JUST LEFT...

BUT I DON'T RECOGNIZE THE SKYLINE...

YOU THINK YOU CAN DO IT WITHOUT YOUR TREADMILL... OR EVEREST?

I'VE GOT TO TRY.


THEY'RE ESCAPING!

LEAVE HIM TO ME. I CAN TAKE HIM.

NOT ON YOUR BEST DAY, QUICK.

I'M THE FASTEST MAN ALIVE.

I'M ON YOUR SIDE, BUDDY...



THIS IS
CAPTAIN
MARVEL'S
EARTH,
ATOM.

YEAH, WE
WERE HERE
DURING THAT
SIVANA
INCIDENT...

... MAYBE
WE SHOULD
SEE WHAT HE
KNOWS?

NO. I GOT
A NASTY FEELING
WE ARE RUNNING OUT
OF TIME AND IT MAY
TAKE A WHILE TO
ZERO IN ON OUR
REALITY.

I USUALLY
HAVE A SORT
OF HOMING
INSTINCT...

... BUT
I JUST FEEL
CONFUSED...

... LIKE
ALL OF THE
REALITIES ARE
MERGING.



WE MUST
BE BACK IN
THE 1940S.

THEY
DID NOT USE
FOKKER DR1S
IN THE SECOND
WORLD WAR.

NOR WERE
THERE OLD WEST
GUNSLINGERS.

THAT'S
JONAH HEX,
HE WAS A
LEGEND.

THE EYE
OF THE STORM
MUST BE A NEXUS
OF INTERSECTING
PERIODS OF
TIME.

Y' THINK?
WELL I'D
SAY...

...THE
INTERSECTION'S
ABOUT T'GET
GRIDLOCKED.

I DON'T SEE
ANY IMPACTS --
THE DIFFERENT ERAS
MUST STILL BE OUT
OF PHASE WITH
EACH OTHER.

OVER THERE,
ZATANNA. IS
THAT THE J'ONN
J'ONZZ FROM
OUR TIME?

THERE IS
ONE WAY TO
BE SURE.

SEYE SUCOF
NO EHT WON.



IT'S ALL GONE!

ZATANNA CAST A SPELL.

YA FIXED ALL THAT TIME JUMBLE WITH A SPELL, GORGEOUS? I'M IMPRESSED.

IT IS NOT "FIXED." I MERELY FOCUSED OUR PERCEPTIONS TO THE NARROWEST BAND OF OUR SHARED TEMPORAL REFERENCE.

AND IT'S EXTREMELY LOCALIZED.

CHAOS THAT IS CLEARLY THE PRELUDE TO SOMETHING COSMICALLY TERMINAL.

THE REST OF THE WORLD CAN STILL SEE THE CHAOS.

OVER THERE... A BOOM TUBE.

IT'S BARDA.

BARDA -- SCOTT... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YES, THOUGH IT WAS A DIFFICULT TRANSITION.

THE DIMENSIONS USED TO BYPASS NORMAL SPACE ARE COLLAPSING. IT TOOK ALL OF THE POTENTIAL OF OUR HYBRID STATE...

... AND THE COMBINED EFFORT OF THE NEW GODS AND THE GUARDIANS TO GET US FROM NEW GENESIS TO EARTH.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS OCCURRING HERE?

NOT JUST HERE... THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE MULTIVERSE.

ALL OF THE APPARENTLY UNCONNECTED PHENOMENA WE HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATING HAVE A SINGLE CAUSE, THE ONE...

THIS DEVICE WILL CREATE A WINDOW INTO INFINITY SO YOU CAN SEE IT...



...THE LIMBO-CELL.

IT IS VAST. WIDER THAN THE EARTH'S SOLAR ORBIT AT THE NARROWEST POINT.

WHATEVER ITS ORIGIN, IT SOMEHOW EVOLVED TO ABSORB ALL THE DIVERSITY OF EXISTENCE IN ITS OWN DIMENSIONAL PLANE.

SO THE OAN BATTERY DRAIN WAS CAUSED BY THE CREATURE'S APPROACH?

YES. THE CELL REACHED OUR DIMENSION THROUGH TELEPORTATION AND SUBSPACE TRANSIT VECTORS, SO THE UNIVERSE-SPANNING THE GREEN LANTERN CORPS FELT IT FIRST.

AND KAL TOO? SO MUCH CONCENTRATED LIFE FORCE MUST BE AN ATTRACTIVE BAIT.

A POSSIBILITY. THE CELL HAS DIRECTED ITS INCURSION TOWARDS EARTH.

DESAAD OBSERVED THAT, LIKE A COSMIC AMOEBEA, IT IS MOTIVATED SOLELY BY APPETITE AND UNAWARE OF THE DEVASTATION IT CAUSES--PERHAPS EVEN ITS OWN EXISTENCE.

THE CLOSEST THING TO A THOUGHT EXPERIENCED BY THE CELL IS CONTENTMENT AS IT EXPANDS UNCHALLENGED ACROSS ALL THE PLANES OF REALITY.

THE SPECTRE, AND OTHERS OF HIS ILK, OBVIOUSLY FAILED TO SENSE ANY THREAT BECAUSE THE ENTITY GENERATED NO EVIL OR NEGATIVE VIBRATIONS.

DARKSEID WAS UNIQUE IN THE UNIVERSE. HE COULD SENSE THE CELL'S CONTENTMENT...IT WAS A COMPLETE ANATHEMA TO HIM.

ONCE DESAAD HAD LEARNED ALL HE COULD, DARKSEID ORDERED IT DESTROYED.

SO THAT IS WHY HE DISPATCHED A DOOMSDAY DEVICE TO EARTH.

I HAVE A SIMILAR WEAPON HERE. BUT BEFORE WE CAN LAUNCH IT...

LIFE FORCE FIRST, THEN THE ENTIRE SPECTRUM OF ENERGY FORMS AND FINALLY EVEN MATTER. NOW IT HAS BEGUN TO VIOLATE THE FABRIC OF SUBSPACE. LEECHING INTO OTHER REALITIES.

...I MUST CALCULATE THE OPTIMUM DELIVERY VECTOR--

AAAA



SCOTT?!

STILL HERE, BABE. SORRY I HAD TO BREAK CONTACT SO DRAMATICALLY BUT THE BEAST HAD STARTED TO PULL ME IN ALONG THE PROBE BEAM.

THE LIMBO-CELL ABSORBS LIFE FORCE AT A FAR FASTER RATE THAN WE CONSIDERED.

THEN THE PLAN WILL NOT WORK.

PLAN?

KAL, NO. THIS MENACE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR COLLAPSE IN PERU.

I HAVE HEARD ALL THAT HAS BEEN DISCUSSED AS I APPROACHED, J'ONN.

THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE MUST BE DETONATED WITHIN THE NUCLEUS IF THE ENTITY IS TO BE DESTROYED.

CAN'T YOU USE SOME SORT OF MISSILE?

AN ELECTRONIC BRAIN MAY NOT BE ABLE TO NAVIGATE THE SWIRLING COSMO-PLASMIC MASS. THERE ISN'T TIME FOR THEORY OR TEST SHOTS. WE WILL HAVE ONLY ONE CHANCE.

PERHAPS I COULD TRY?


YES. AND THOUGH THE NEXUS WOULD HAVE EXISTED FOR MERE SECONDS, THE CELL DRAINED YOUR POWERS.

YOU BELIEVE THE ENTITY REACHED US THROUGH THE TELEPORT NEXUS DESPERO AND EVIL STAR USED TO ESCAPE WHILE WE WERE DISTRACTED BY THE AVALANCHE.

THEN I MUST ACT QUICKLY.

DO YOU WANT TO DIE? IS THAT WHAT HAS ALWAYS DRIVEN YOU?

FOR A LONG TIME I... WASN'T SURE... BUT NOW... FACED WITH THIS... I AM AFRAID.



KEEP HIM
DISORIENTED.
CANARY. HE CAN'T
USE THE RING IF
HE CAN'T CON-
CENTRATE.

RIGHT...

...EXCEPT...

...AFTER
YOUR TRAP
AT THE DOOM
PATROL'S
HQ...

I SET MY
RING ON AUTO
DEFENSE.

HAL, YOU'RE
WRONG. THERE WAS
NO TRAP. THE EXPLOSION
AT DR. CAULDER'S HOUSE
WAS AN ACCIDENT...
SAPPHIRE'S TELEPORT
EXIT WENT HAYWIRE.

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
VILLAIN'S CON-
TROLLING YOU,
CANARY...

BUT I'M
GOING TO FIND
OUT WH--THIS
HOUSE...!?

I'M BEGGING
YOU, HAL-- DON'T
INTERFERE... WE'RE
AT A CRITICAL
STAGE...

I WAS HERE
YEARS AGO. IT
BELONGS TO
OLIVER...

THUD



AMAZO...

...LORD,
NO...

SKSH

... WHAT
HAVE YOU
DONE ?

OLIVER'S BODY WAS
WASTED... DYING... BUT
HIS BRAIN WAS HEALTHY
AND THE AMAZO ANDROID
WAS POTENTIALLY A
MASSIVE FORCE FOR
GOOD--

NO... NO!
IF YOU BELIEVED
THIS WAS RIGHT
YOU WOULDN'T HAVE
EMPLOYED CROOKS
TO STEAL... TO
KIDNAP!

DR.
CAULDER...
WHY DID
YOU
HELP?

BLACK
CANARY'S ACTIONS
WERE EXTREME BUT
HER INTENTIONS
WERE TRUE.

OLIVER QUEEN
WAS IN RAPID
DECLINE. HE HAD
ONLY HOURS TO LIVE.
THIS WAS CERTAINLY
THE ONLY CHANCE
TO SAVE HIS
BRAIN.

... SOME SORT
OF PROGRAM
ACTIVATED AND
AUTOMATICALLY
INTEGRATED--

AND,
YOU UNLEASHED
AMAZO ON THE
WORLD...

... AND
I HAVE
TO STOP
HIM.

SO WHAT
WENT WRONG?
WHERE IS HE
NOW?

THE CRANIAL
CAVITY WAS ALREADY
STRUCTURED TO
ACCEPT AN ORGANIC
BRAIN... AND WHEN
I MADE THE FINAL
CONNECTION...

NO!

I CANNOT
ALLOW
THAT.



KAL'S IN
INCREDIBLE
PAIN.

BUT HE IS
MANAGING
TO STAY
CONSCIOUS.

HE'S
BARELY
MOVING,
THOUGH.

NO, THAT'S THE
LENSING EFFECT
OF THE "WINDOW"
KEEPING HIM IN
FOCUS.

KAL HAS
TRAVELED
HUNDREDS OF
MILES... BUT HE
IS SLOWING...
AND STILL HAS
A VERY LONG
WAY TO
GO...

HE CANNOT
SUCCEED. AS
SOON AS KAL
CROSSED THE
THRESHOLD THE
LIMBO-CELL
STARTED TO
DRAIN HIS
LIFE FORCE.

HE
WILL BE DEAD
BEFORE HE GETS
CLOSE ENOUGH TO
POSITION THE
BOMB.

WE
MUST HELP
HIM.

HOW? NONE
OF US COULD
REACH HIM AND
ANY ENERGY PRO-
JECTION WOULD
BE INSTANTLY
ABSORBED.

AND HERE
COMES MORE
TROUBLE...

...AMAZO!

HOLD
BACK, HAWK-
WOMAN. I
SENSE...



... WE
ARE NOT HIS
TARGET.

HOLD ON!
AMAZO IS ON
OUR SIDE.

YES, BLACK
CANARY. I
SENSED THE
MIND OF A
FRIEND.

ARE YOU
SURE?

HIS
ACTIONS WILL
SOON CONFIRM
MY BELIEF.

HE'S
RESCUING
SUPER-
MAN.

NOT YET.

NOT
IF I CAN
RESTORE HIS
ENERGY...

I FEAR
HE IS TOO
LATE...

... KAL
IS DEAD.



YOU JUST NEEDED A TRANSFUSION OF ENERGY.

YOU SIPHONED IT FROM THE LIMBO-CELL?

YEAH. I DON'T KNOW HOW... IT WAS INSTINCT.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SUPERMAN?

YES... THANK YOU. BUT HOW...?

YOUR KRYPTONIAN BIOLOGICAL MATRIX IS INCREDIBLY RESILIENT.

IS IT REALLY YOU IN THERE, OLIVER?

YES... SORRY I KNOCKED YOU ASIDE AT THE HOUSE, HAL.

WHEN I WOKE I HAD THIS SENSE... AN AWARENESS OF *EVERYTHING*... I *KNEW* WHAT WAS GOING ON HERE...

... AND I *KNEW* SUPERMAN WAS IN MORTAL DANGER...

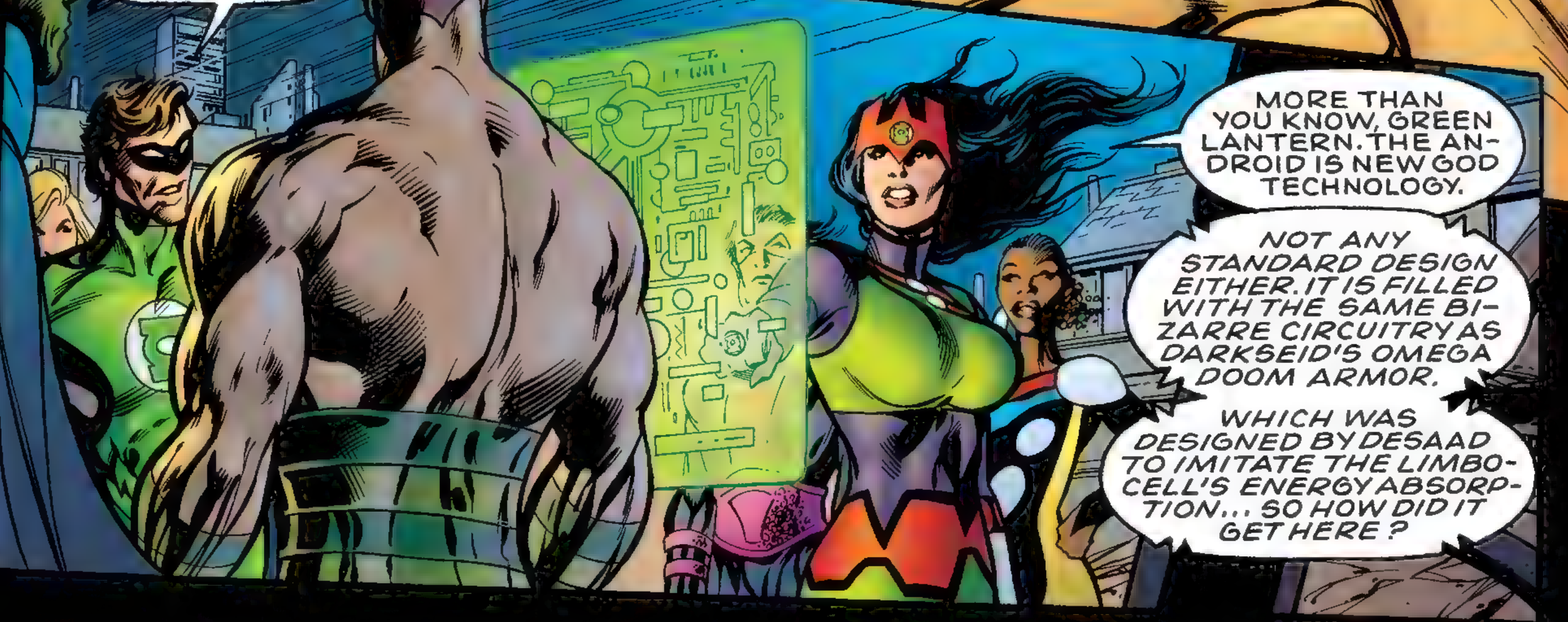
MY CO-ORDINATION WAS A BIT OFF AT FIRST AND THIS VOICE IS STRANGE.

BUT I FEEL GOOD... BETTER EVERY SECOND...

... MORE INTEGRATED. LIKE I'M NOT JUST *IN* HERE...

BUT THIS... *IS* ME.

INCREDIBLE!



MORE THAN YOU KNOW, GREEN LANTERN. THE ANDROID IS NEW GOD TECHNOLOGY.

NOT ANY STANDARD DESIGN EITHER. IT IS FILLED WITH THE SAME BIZARRE CIRCUITRY AS DARKSEID'S OMEGA L DOOM ARMOR.

WHICH WAS DESIGNED BY DESAAD TO IMITATE THE LIMBO-CELL'S ENERGY ABSORPTION... SO HOW DID IT GET HERE?



THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT. WHAT MATTERS IS I CAN DELIVER THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE.

YOU HAVE THE BEST CHANCE.

THE ONLY CHANCE... BUT IT WOULD BE UNLIKELY THAT YOU RETURN.

STOPPING THAT COSMIC AMOEBA IS ALL THAT COUNTS.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW, STRANGER? YOU STILL HAVEN'T EXPLAINED WHY YOU SUDDENLY APPEARED AT THE MANSION.

NO, OLIVER! THIS IS WRONG. IT'S LESS THAN AN HOUR SINCE YOUR BRAIN WAS TRANSPLANTED AND NOW YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO THIS... IT'S ALL TOO COINCIDENTAL!

I SEE WHAT OTHERS CANNOT. A PATH THROUGH THE CHAOS. BUT IT IS A PATH I MUST WALK ALONE.

THAT'S NO ANSWER. SOMEHOW YOU HAVE MANIPULATED ALL OF THIS. I KNOW IT.

THE PLAN WAS YOURS, DINAH LANCE.

I ASSISTED YOU IN VARIOUS GUISES BECAUSE IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT YOU SUCCEED.

BUT THE FINAL DECISION BELONGS TO OLIVER QUEEN.

THERE IS NO CHOICE. I'M NEEDED AND I CAN DO IT.

BUT...

NO TIME TO ARGUE, DINAH. IF I DON'T ACT QUICKLY THE DAMAGE THAT THING IS CAUSING WILL BE IRREVERSIBLE.



OH...
OLIVER... I
SHOULD NEVER
HAVE--

I'M GLAD YOU
DID, LOVER.

I WAS AS GOOD
AS DEAD... YOU GAVE
ME A CHANCE TO DO
SOMETHING... SOME-
THING TRULY WON-
DERFUL.

THANK
YOU.

FOR
EVERY-
THING.

SHAYERA...

I... I WAS
RESPONSIBLE.
I BROKE RANKS
DURING THE
BATTLE...

THE DAY
HAWKMAN
DIED...

CAN YOU
FORGIVE
ME?

OLIVER...
I...

...I WAS
GRANDSTANDING...
TRYING TO PROVE
MYSELF THE EQUAL
OF THE MORE
POWERFUL
JLA.

I PAID
THE PRICE
FOR MY STUPID
ARROGANCE...
BUT SO DID
KATAR.

I DO.
AS WOULD,
KATAR.

HE
WAS PROUD
TO CALL YOU
COMRADE... AND
FRIEND.

I KNOW,
BUDDY. SO MUCH
TO SAY BUT SO
LITTLE TIME--
EVEN LESS THAN
YOU THINK.

SHAKK

EVEN ZATANNA'S SPELL CAN'T OBSCURE WHAT IS OCCURRING NOW.

THE FABRIC OF REALITY IS ABOUT TO GO TERMINAL.

JUST WATCH AND PRAY, HAL.

I'M THE ONE WITH THE JUICE THIS TIME.

YOU'RE GROWING!

COURTESY OF ELASTI-GIRL.

CAN I HELP?


THIS BODY CONTAINS THE POWER MATRIX OF ALL THE META-HUMANS EVER ENCOUNTERED BY AMAZO.

AND THE ANDROID PROCESSING CAPACITY HAS ALREADY CALCULATED THE BEST PLAN TO DELIVER THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE TO THE NUCLEUS.

ALONG WITH THIS GIANT STATURE AND AMAZO'S OWN ENERGY ABSORPTION CAPABILITY...

...I'LL NEED A COMBINATION OF FIRESTORM'S SUB-ATOMIC MANIPULATION, METAMORPHO'S CHEMICAL WIZARDRY AND SUPER-MAN'S FLIGHT CAPABILITY, STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE...

... BUT THE IRONY IS, THE KEY FACTOR IS A SIMPLE OLD HUMAN SKILL.

A full-page comic book illustration depicting a fierce battle between Batman and a monstrous, multi-headed creature. The monster has a large, grotesque head with a wide, toothy grin and a yellow eye. It has multiple arms, some holding weapons like a sword. Batman, in his iconic suit, is shown in various dynamic poses, fighting the creature. The background is a fiery, orange-red landscape with blue energy blasts and falling debris. The scene is framed by jagged, white lines, suggesting a high-impact action sequence.

AGAIN,
BATMAN...
YOU HURT ME...
AGAIN... BUT YOU
CAN'T KILL ME...
NOT THIS
TIME!

AND I'M
NOT GOING
TO LET YOU
DIE.

I KNOW
THAT'S WHAT
YOU WANT... TO
DIE! TO STOP
THE PAIN.


YOU CAN'T
BEAR THE MEMORY
OF YOUR SCRAWNY
SIDEKICKS PEELED
LIKE GRAPES.

GAH! YOU'LL
NEVER HURT
ANYONE AGAIN,
MONSTER.

TO MAKE
SURE OF
THAT...

...I'LL
HAPPILY
FOLLOW
YOU...

...INTO
HELL.



FOR ALL OUR
POWERS WE CAN DO
NOTHING... EXCEPT WAIT
AND PRAY OLIVER IS
SUCCESSFUL.

HE WON'T
SUFFER, WILL HE...
PLEASE TELL ME
HE ISN'T...

HE IS
BEYOND THE
RANGE OF MY
VISION.

I CAN
SEE.

OLIVER
QUEEN'S SPEED
CONTINUES TO
INCREASE...

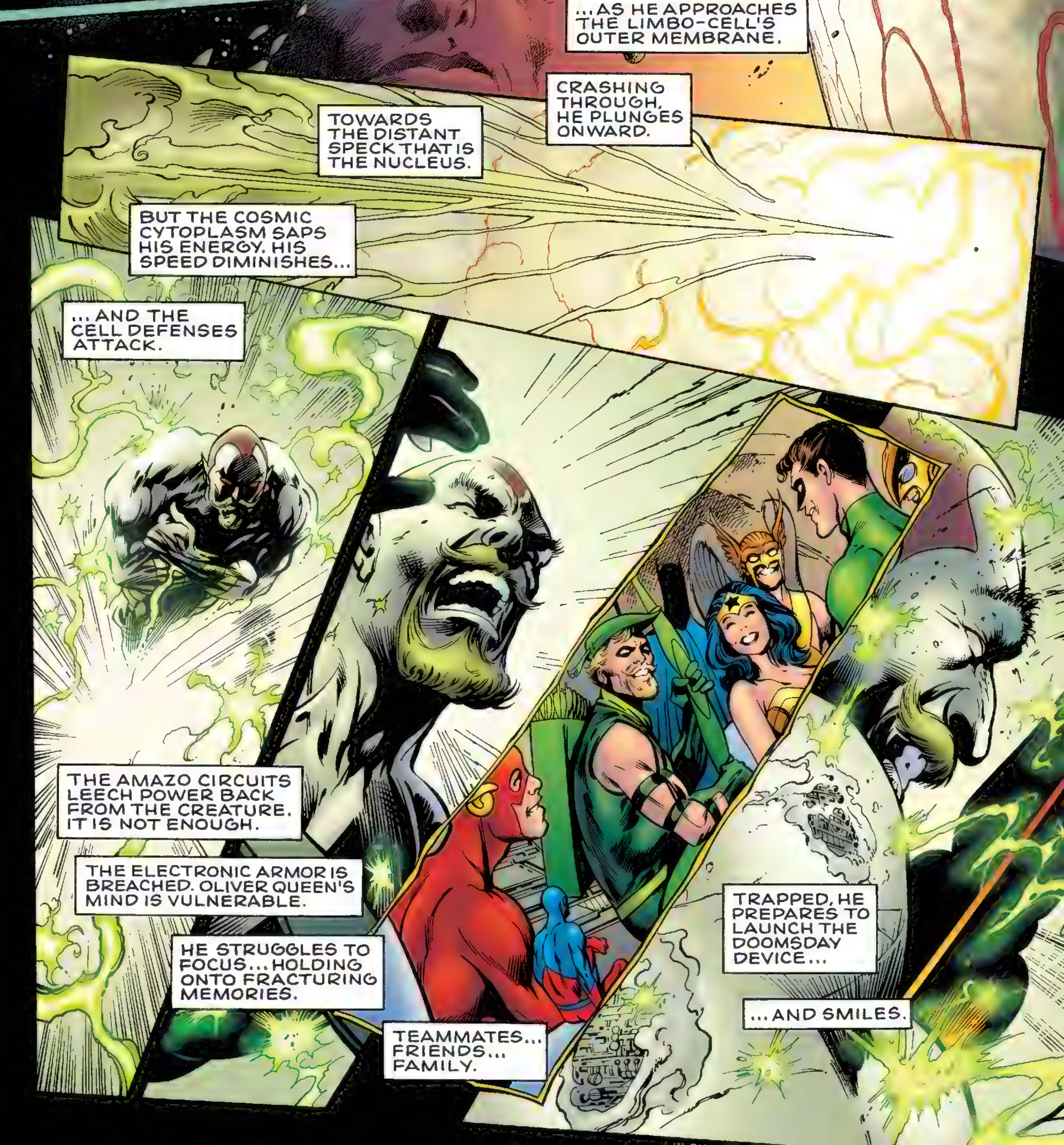
... AS HE APPROACHES
THE LIMBO-CELL'S
OUTER MEMBRANE.

CRASHING
THROUGH,
HE PLUNGES
ONWARD.

TOWARDS
THE DISTANT
SPECK THAT IS
THE NUCLEUS.

BUT THE COSMIC
CYTOPLASM SAPS
HIS ENERGY. HIS
SPEED DIMINISHES...

... AND THE
CELL DEFENSES
ATTACK.



THE AMAZO CIRCUITS
LEECH POWER BACK
FROM THE CREATURE.
IT IS NOT ENOUGH.


THE ELECTRONIC ARMOR IS
BREACHED. OLIVER QUEEN'S
MIND IS VULNERABLE.

HE STRUGGLES TO
FOCUS... HOLDING
ONTO FRACTURING
MEMORIES.

TEAMMATES...
FRIENDS...
FAMILY.

TRAPPED, HE
PREPARES TO
LAUNCH THE
DOOMSDAY
DEVICE...

... AND SMILES.



... SMILES THAT THE
FATE OF THE MULTI-
VERSE DEPENDS
ON MAN'S OLDEST
WEAPON--*HIS*
WEAPON.

THE ANDROID
BODY WEAKENS--
TIME IS SHORT.

OLIVER STRUGGLES
TO FOCUS ON THE
TARGET...

FRIENDS...
FAMILY...
AND...

... DINAH...

... TO FOCUS... ON
THE NUCLEUS. SO
VERY FAR AWAY.

DINAH...

DI...

...I'LL
MAKE YOU
SUFFER... ...FOR
ETERNITY.

WHA...!

NO... NOT
YOU--

NOOOO!!!

BATMAN...

HE'S
ALIVE...

...THOUGH I DON'T KNOW HOW.

I HAD HELP.

LIE STILL, BRUCE.

DON'T WORRY... SELINA. I'M OKAY. THE NIGHTMARE'S OVER...

...IT'S ALL OVER.

...THE CELL JUST VAPORIZED.

DARKSEID CERTAINLY KNEW HOW TO BUILD A REALLY NASTY WEAPON.

FIENDISHLY PRACTICAL. THE IMPLOSION CONSUMED ITSELF THERE WILL BE NO SHOCK WAVE OR DESTRUCTIVE FALLOUT.

I SEE ITS WONDER. THE ENERGY STOLEN BY THE ENTITY IS RELEASED BACK INTO INFINITY...

...CARRIED ON THE TIDES OF TIME AND SPACE.

FLOODING BACK TO WHERE IT BELONGS.

RESTORING HARMONY TO THE EARTH...

...THE UNIVERSE...

...AND ALL ALTERNATE REALITIES OF THE MULTIVERSE.

THE TIME STREAM TOO RESUMES ITS NORMAL FLOW...

...AND THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN DIMENSIONAL PLANES ARE RE-FORMING.

GUYS, THERE'S TROUBLE... A BIG BAD--

WE KNOW...



...BUT IT IS OVER. THE MULTIVERSE IS ALREADY RECOVERING.

AND ONLY ONE CASUALTY. A FAIR TRADE, EH, STRANGER. ONE LIFE TO SAVE THE UNIVERSE.

THE UNIVERSE WAS NEVER MY CONCERN, DINAH LANCE.



I ACTED TO EASE THE SUFFERING OF A TORTURED SOUL.



THE FATE OF THE MULTIVERSE WAS IN THE HANDS OF OLIVER QUEEN.



WE ONLY HAVE YOUR WORD FOR THAT, STRANGER.

AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR CONSCIENCE? IS IT STILL CLEAR?

ANSWER ME--



GONE! CURSE HIM AND HIS HALF-TRUTHS AND MANIPULATION...

WHATEVER HIS METHODS, THE PHANTOM STRANGER HAS ALWAYS WORKED TO HELP HUMANITY IN THE PAST, DIANA.

J'ONN'S RIGHT. WE WERE CHASING OUR TAILS, OBVIOUS TO THE REAL DANGER-- EVEN KAL WAS OUT OF HIS LEAGUE.



IT'S THE TRUTH. I HAVE BEEN HUMBLLED TODAY... TWICE.

NO OFFENSE, SUPER-MAN.

SO YOU WON'T BE TRYING TO SAVE THE WORLD SINGLE-HANDEDLY ANYMORE?



J'ONN
CONVINCED ME
THAT I NEED TO
SPEND TIME AMONG
ORDINARY
PEOPLE.

I THINK A
CERTAIN FE-
MALE REPORTER
WAS MORE OF
AN INFLUENCE
THAN I.

IF I HAVE EVER
DEMEANED YOU, FLASH, I
APOLOGIZE. THOUGH, IN TRUTH,
I COULD NEVER COMPETE
WITH YOU, THE FASTEST
MAN ALIVE.

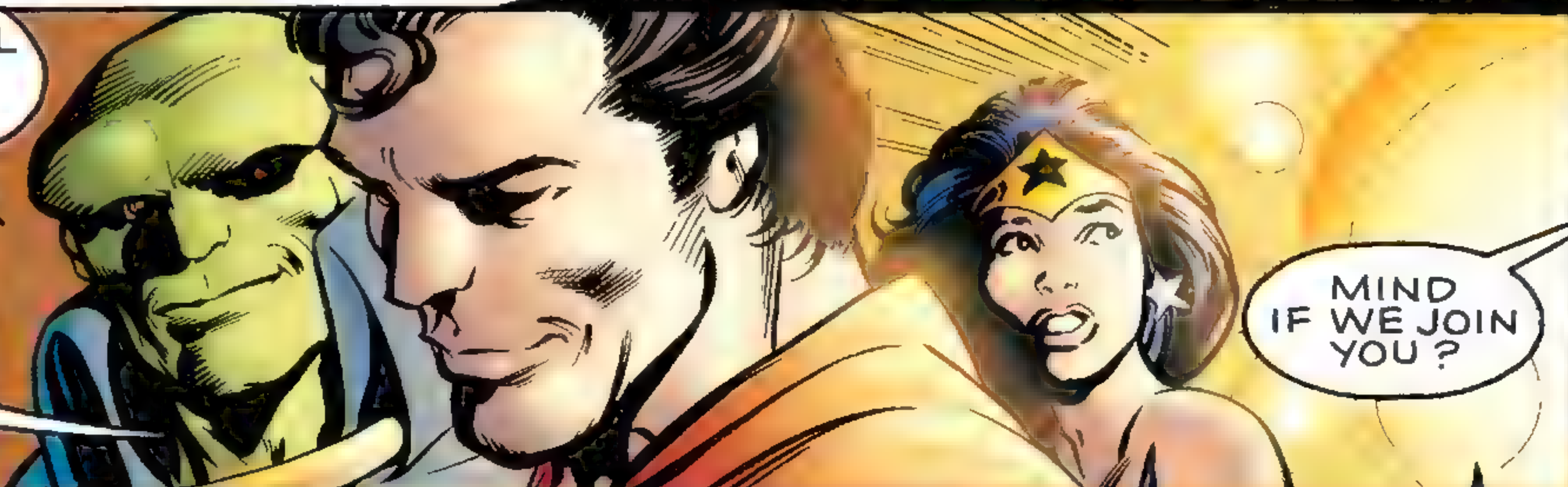


DIDJA
HEAR SUPES? THE
FASTEST--

SAVE IT,
FLASH. WITH THAT
BULBOUS NOGGIN AND
SCRAWNY NECK YOU
CAN'T AFFORD TO
GET SWELLHEADED.
YOU'D LOOK LIKE A
RED LOLLIPOP!

I SUSPECT LOIS WILL
FEATURE GREATLY
IN YOUR FUTURE,
KAL.

PERHAPS--
BUT FIRST WE
MUST ATTEND TO
THE DISARRAY LEFT
IN THE WAKE OF
THE CRISIS.



MIND
IF WE JOIN
YOU?



BATMAN...

YOU LOOK
LIKE YOU'VE
BEEN THROUGH
HELL.

AND
BACK.

I'M FINE.



JUST
PUTTING AN
OLD GHOST
TO REST.

HMMPH.

DR. FATE
DISCERNED WHAT
HAS GONE ON HERE
AND I THOUGHT... WELL,
IT'S BEEN A WHILE
AND I THOUGHT IT
WAS TIME...



TO REJOIN
THE JLA!

ACE.

'BOUT
TIME.

OLIVER
QUEEN'S SAC-
RIFICE GIVES US
ALL NEW HOPE,
BATMAN.



THEN
LET'S GET
TO IT -- WE
HAVE WORK
TO DO.

DON'T THINK
OF IT AS WORK,
LANTERN... IT'S
ADVENTURE.

I'M WITH
YOU, PARTNER.
FULL SPEED
AHEAD.

NEVER THE END.



AFTERWORD

BARRY ALLEN HAS A BIG HEAD AND A SKINNY NECK...

When I first started reading comics, I didn't ever consider the creators. I mean, on some level, I knew comics were written and drawn, but it just wasn't important.

All I cared about were the characters and stories.

DC Comics appeared in my hometown, in England, sometime in the sixties, and since anything can only be original once, it is difficult, now, to appreciate how startlingly innovative and imaginative they were. Even the basic concept of superheroes was new.

At the time, comics were read, not collected. If a book was especially good, or you could afford it, you might hold on to it, but the overriding impulse to see as many comics as possible ensured readers would regularly trade or swap at one of the secondhand book stalls.

The problem was, for a number of complex and mysterious reasons, imported American titles were poorly distributed, and odd issues, out of sequence and sometimes years apart, seemed to appear at random. The fact we could enjoy each issue as it materialized is a testament to their accessibility. Crossovers were unheard of and continuing stories were, thankfully, rare. Most comics had at least one full story, others like the 80-page specials were treasure troves of novelty and innovation, but most crucial to new or occasional readers was the quality of storytelling and characterization.

But we took it all for granted.

While we were reading those disposable comics, no one could have guessed the gaudily clad adventurers that the moral majority feared would corrupt our innocence were to become the icons. They were flashes of brilliance in the fireworks display of comics creativity. Part of a continuum that surged and ebbed with the

fickle allegiance of a readership constantly seeking the thrill of novelty and fashion. It is only in a historical context, with an overview of the evolution in comics, that certain characters, and creators, stand out.

The first time I was consciously aware of a character having an individual look, or personality, was the first appearance of the Flash, in *SHOWCASE* #4. It was published in 1956, the year I was born, but it didn't reach me until I was eight or nine. At some point, I decided the Flash had a light physique because he was a runner and had a big forehead

because, in his secret identity, he was a forensic scientist and really smart.

I think I was too young to appreciate that the characteristics were the creation of Carmine Infantino and Joe Kubert. It just made sense. It was *WHO* Barry Allen was.

The original Justice League of America comic was the first team book I encountered. The stories were always weird, fast-paced and action-packed, but my lasting memory was of the organic machinery and an endless variety of quirky villains and aliens, all of it due to the massive skill and talent of Mike Sekowsky.

It's only in retrospect that I can identify this. So much of truly great storytelling is subliminal. And that's how it should be.

If you know how the magician does the trick, there isn't any magic.

Gil Kane distilled the essence of heroism and nobility in graceful, elegant forms with the most stunning and stylish anatomy of any artist, ever. A list of characters too numerous to mention, for many publishers, benefited from the dynamic power Gil Kane infused in everything he drew, but most importantly, in the creation and evolution of the superhero genre. He created a template for all artists to follow, and in doing so, defined two of the greatest and most unique heroes ever: Green Lantern and the Atom.

The mood and reality of Joe Kubert's work defined Hawkman. Raw, and brilliantly simple, his art contained emotional truth and humanity that gave a credibility to the most absurd scenario.

Jim Aparo, one of the most underrated artists in comics, drew an imposing and powerful Batman in *THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD*. A chilling Spectre in *WEIRD ADVENTURES*. But best of all, or at least my favorite, was his Aquaman. A truly regal figure. Sleek, arrogant, and volatile.

Neal Adams influenced entire generations of artists and storytellers with a style that defies any simplistic categorization. He managed to encapsulate the kinetic energy of Big Foot cartoons with an almost photographic surface reality and a clean open simplicity that contained layers of subtlety. I discovered Neal's work on the X-Men, the Avengers, and the Inhumans, for Marvel, but saw little of his legendary DC work, redefining Batman and Green Lantern (because of the previously mentioned comic distribution problems) until many years later, when I had begun to work in comics and was introduced to the world of comics marts, conventions, and back-issue dealers.

Prior to that, I was too busy with real life to be a serious

collector. Comics were a hobby and I was content to make an occasional discovery in local newsagents or on a secondhand book stall.

Particular favorites were the weird DC titles like...*THE DOOM PATROL*. *METAMORPHO*. *THE CREEPER*. *RAG-MAN*. *BLACK ORCHID*. *THE PHANTOM STRANGER*.

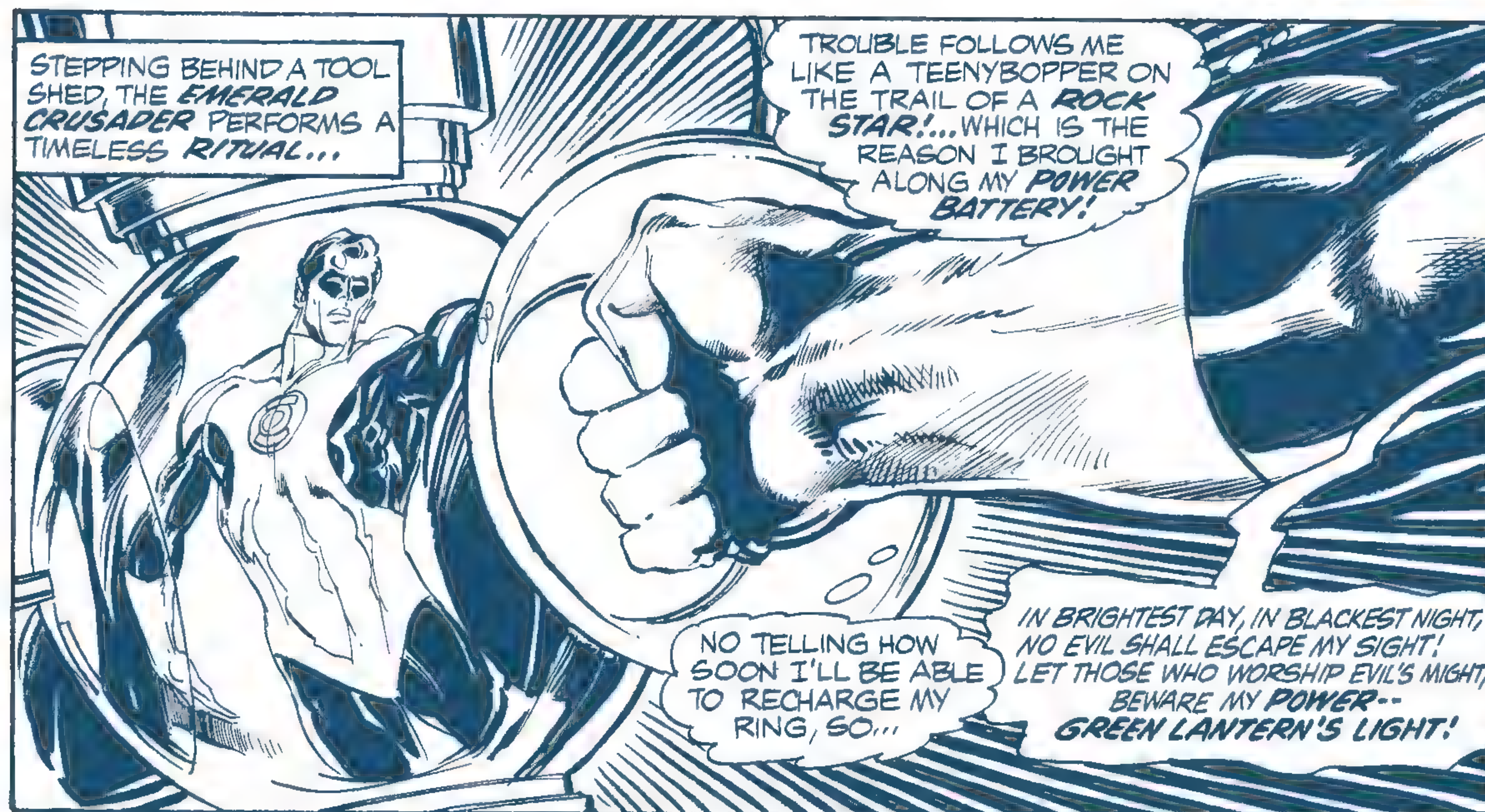
But best of all was the art.

Don Newton's Batman was a marvelous chiaroscuro.

Nestor Redondo's gorgeous, lush—and countless other qualities language is unable to describe—art on Swamp Thing and Rima the Jungle Girl.

Steve Ditko's wild, tortured anatomy and singular abstract designs on Shade, the Changing Man, a visual concept far ahead of its time that would perfectly exploit the new color technology.

Jack Kirby's endless inventiveness on the New Gods, OMAC, and Kamandi.





Finger, Dick Sprang, Curt Swan, Kurt Schaffenberger (who had inspired my earliest attempts at drawing), and writers like Gardner Fox, John Broome, and Julius Schwartz, who had inspired me to be a storyteller.

Dave Gibbons' magical Green Lantern Corps short stories, which have long deserved to be reprinted as a single volume.

Michael Golden and Russ Heath's unique pairing on Mister Miracle.

Trevor Von Eeden's Green Arrow miniseries.

José Luis García-López, on anything.

I'm sure that I've alienated many writers and fans of writers by focusing on my appreciation of art and artists. It isn't a deliberate slight, I was simply ignorant of who



was responsible for creating the story. I believed the writer only wrote the words (which was true in some cases) and it seemed to me that a good artist always told a good story, whereas a writer's work depended greatly on the artist he was working with.

It wasn't until after I befriended Paul Neary, then Editor-in-Chief of Marvel UK, that I got a comprehensive picture of the Silver Age. Paul has an extensive collection and the knowledge to go with it, so I was able to review comics I hadn't seen since my youth and, for the first time, learned the names of artists like Wayne Boring, Bill

Anyway. In 1993, after a massive piece of luck, the help of a few kind people, and a lot of hard work, I found myself, a seasoned professional, at lunch with Archie Goodwin.

Archie suggested I might like to try my hand at a JLA Elseworlds. Anyone familiar with the Elseworlds format, or who has read the back cover of this book, will know this imprint was specifically designed to allow comics creators to use established DC characters in radically different ways.

And all but those who are only familiar with the current DC line will know that the characters in this book are, except for a few very minor revisions (to J'onn J'onzz and Hawkwoman), the Silver Age originals.

Not one to be hindered by a technicality, I saw the Elseworlds format as an opportunity to write and draw some of my childhood favorites without the burden of complex continuity or mainstream limitations.

It caused more than a little confusion at first.

An Elseworlds where the classic Justice League in the classic DC Universe do all the classic stuff.

There weren't any newly designed characters—except for the Liberators and Krypto (for the cheesiest red herring in comics history), all of which amounted to a few scribbles on a script edge. So I didn't have any exciting sketches to illustrate this premise.

Even the narrative structure is borrowed from JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA #200, which had splash pages, integrated as enlarged story panels, in each character chapter. Old-timers will also remember the format first appeared in Spider-Man Annual #1. Both titles stuck in my mind as something special, which is why, despite all the obvious restrictions, I decided to use such a formal framework.

It also seemed appropriate because THE NAIL is an attempt to recapture the sense of fun in comics I read as a kid and, more importantly, the accessibility.

There are no narrative captions. No thought balloons. Just a simple, sharp, fast-paced story that can be read by anyone, of any age, including those who haven't developed the skill (which most comics readers take for granted) to simultaneously read art and two or three textual threads. Even if, by simplifying the text, I risked alienating a few readers who see the literary conventions as essential sophistication.

It was a lot of hard work, but a lot of fun, too. It was thanks entirely to the craftsmanship of the writers and artists, a few of whom I've listed in the preceding pages, who literally created the vocabulary of superhero comics and a Universe of unique, superheroic icons.

So, if you thought it was fun, or even if you didn't, someone else might. Remember, THE NAIL is an experiment in accessibility, especially to people who don't usually read comics.

So don't wrap this book in plastic and bury it in a collection.

Pass it around.

Alan Davis
1998





THE NAIL





THE NAIL



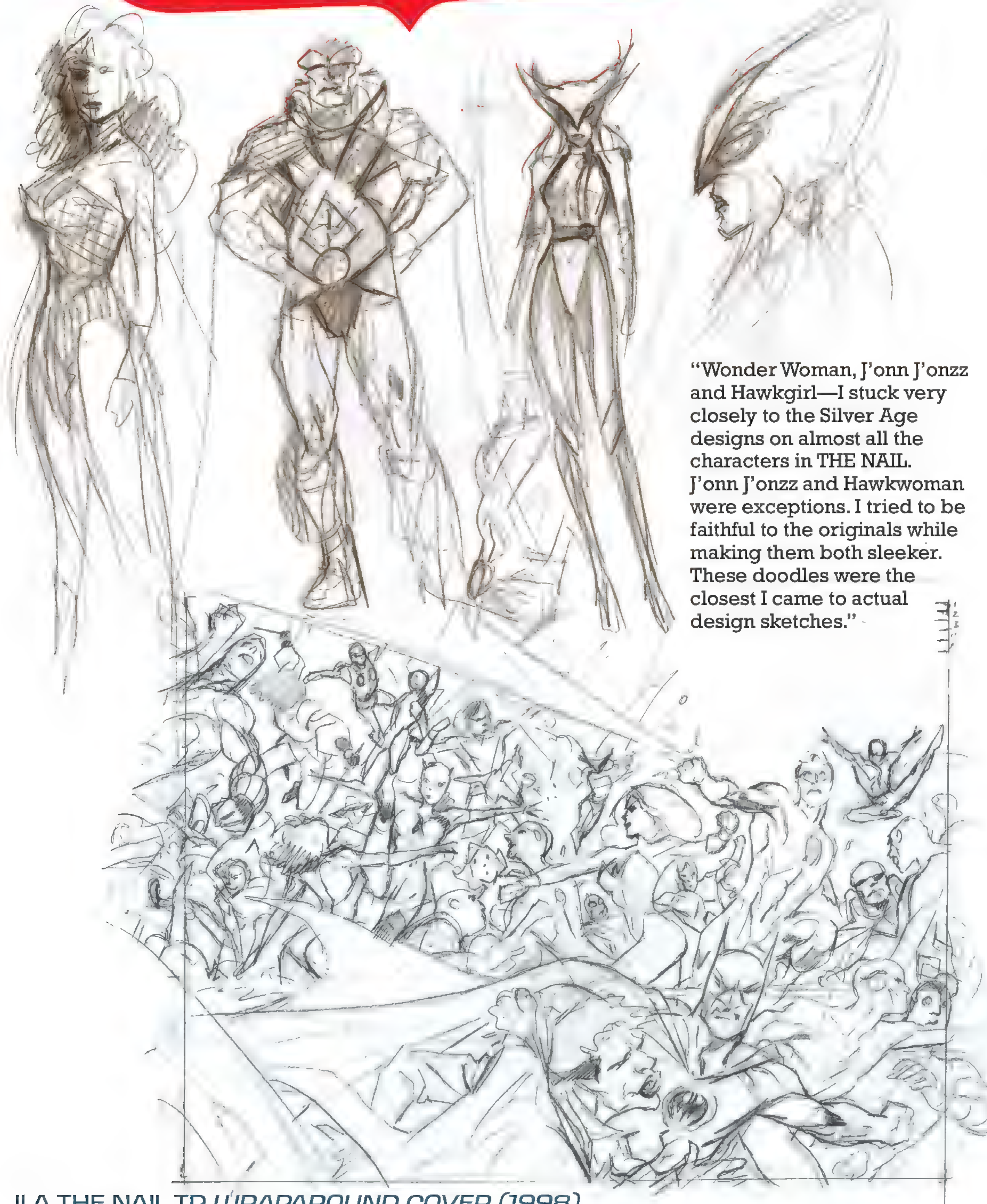






SKETCHES

WONDER WOMAN,
J'ONN J'ONZZ AND
HAWKGIRL SKETCHES



"Wonder Woman, J'onn J'onzz and Hawkgirl—I stuck very closely to the Silver Age designs on almost all the characters in THE NAIL. J'onn J'onzz and Hawkwoman were exceptions. I tried to be faithful to the originals while making them both sleeker. These doodles were the closest I came to actual design sketches."

JLA THE NAIL TP WRAPAROUND COVER (1998)

THE NAIL #1 SKETCH
"THE NAIL #1 cover thumb-
nails—original size around
four inches tall. A photograph
of a nail was supposed to have
been added to the published
image to create a trompe
l'oeil effect."

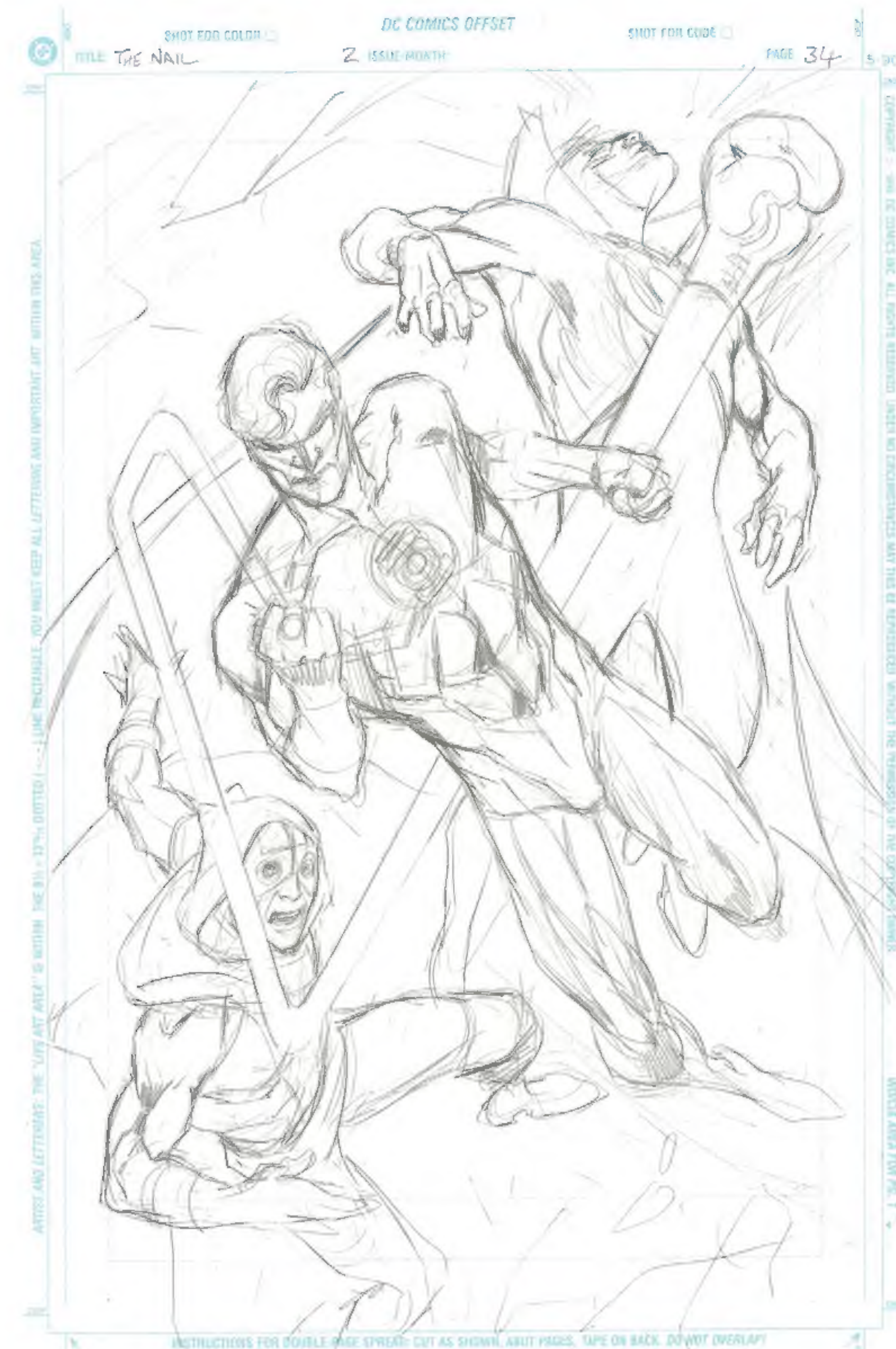


THE NAIL #1
PAGES 2-3 PENCILS



THE NAIL #2 PAGE 10
"I planned to let the text
describe the Flash's search but
decided the page looked too
empty, so added a series of
panels to the sequence."



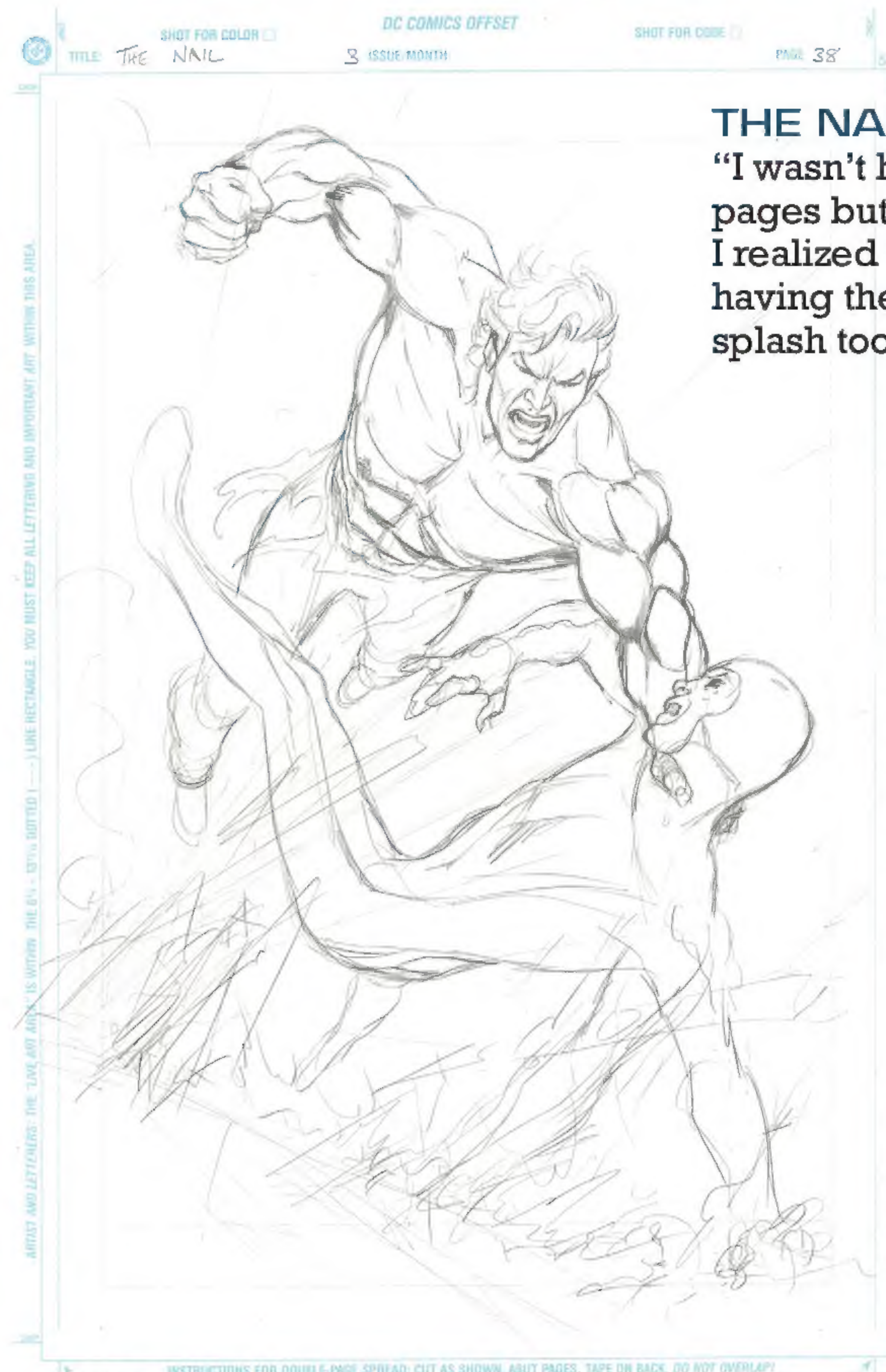
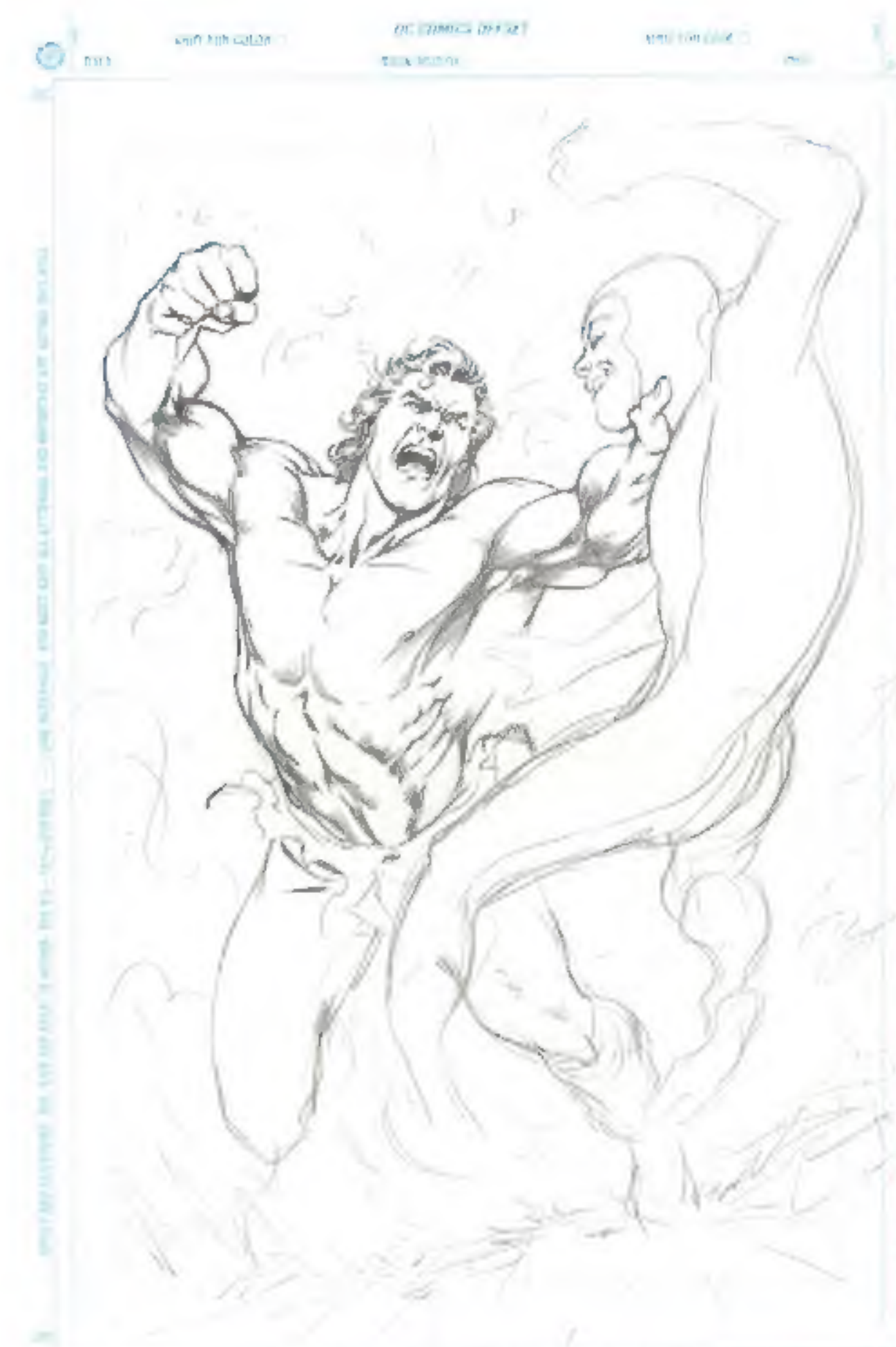


THE NAIL #2 PAGE 34

"Alternate layout. (Full size.) This seemed like a good idea in a very loose thumbnail but tighter pencils lost the dynamism and appeared quite flat."

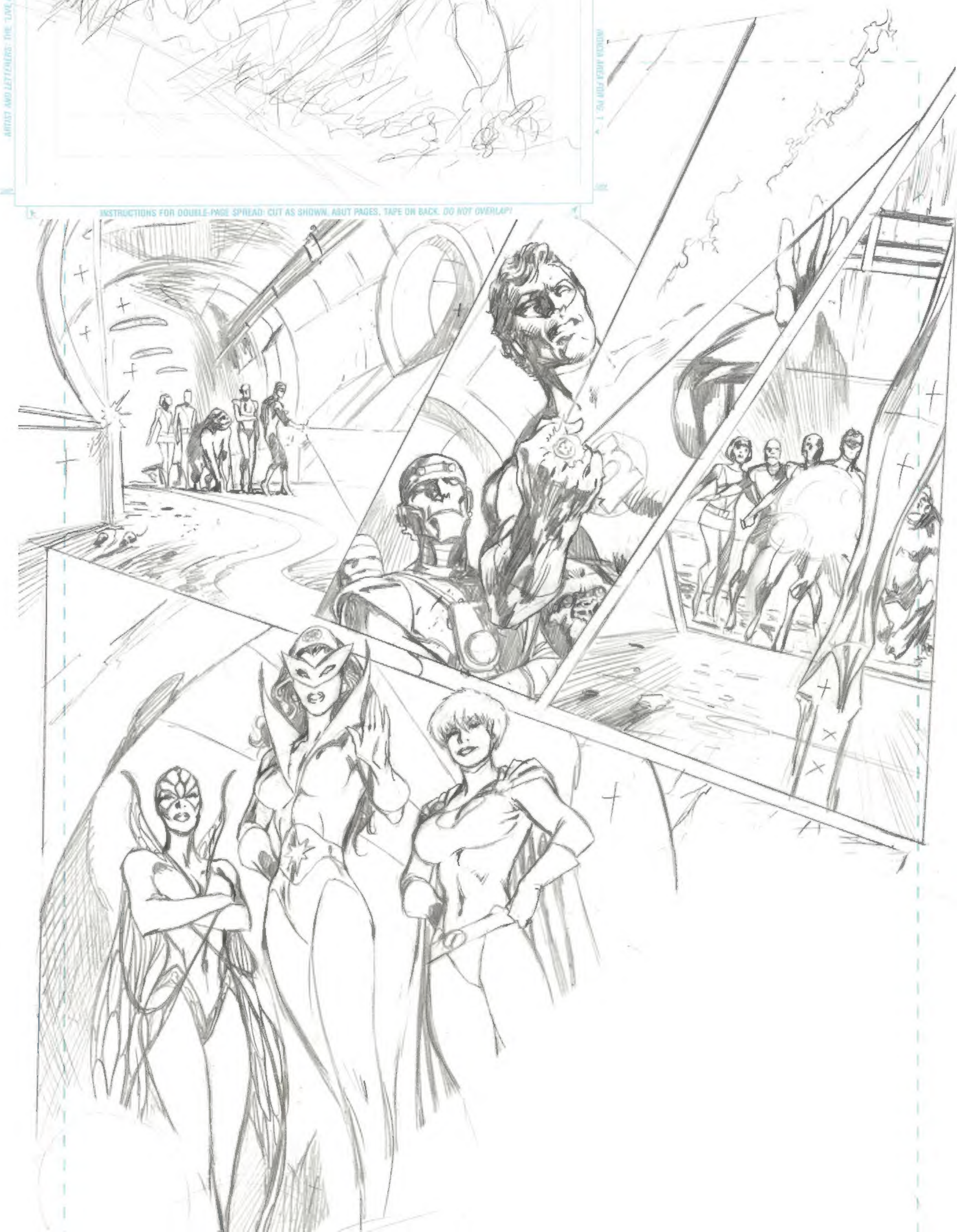


THE NAIL #3 PAGE 48



THE NAIL #3 PAGE 38

"I wasn't happy with any of these pages but kept chasing my tail until I realized what felt wrong to me was having the Kal/Jimmy confrontation splash too early in the story."



ANOTHER NAIL #3 PAGE 12

"The first panel on this page looked great in a thumbnail but seemed empty in the pencils, so I redrew the page."

ANOTHER NAIL #3 PAGE 43

“There are always instances where an extra page or two would help at the climax of a story. I felt this page was too crowded and moved the last panel to the following page when I redrew it.”



ANOTHER NAIL #3 ORIGINAL COVER

“This original rough was rejected in favor of having a larger JLA presence on the cover. (A4 felt tip pen.)”





Formed by the World's Greatest Heroes, the

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

stands tall as the mightiest group of protectors Earth has to offer. Since the group's founding, one hero above all others has stood as their inspiration, guiding light, and moral center: Superman. Now imagine a world without the Man of Steel.

Welcome to the alternate history of **JLA: THE NAIL**.

In a fascinating story of tiny accidents that cascade into cataclysmic disasters, writer/artist Alan Davis (*Batman and the Outsiders*) joined by legendary inker Mark Farmer (*Legion of Super-Heroes*) creates a world that never knew a Superman and a Justice League that is about to face their greatest test of might and morality.

All because of something as simple as a nail.

Justice League of America: The Nail: The Complete Collection includes the entire story line in one trade paperback for the first time! Collects *JLA: The Nail* #1-3 and *JLA: Another Nail* #1-3.

For want of a nail the shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe the horse was lost,
For want of a horse the knight was lost,
For want of a knight the battle was lost.
So it was a kingdom was lost - all for want of a nail.

dccomics.com

SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN...
THIS MONSTER!"

